

Hafa Adai!

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Saipan casino op Imperial Pacific lost half-a-billion dollars in 2019. **PAGE 3**

75¢

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2 raise NMI infections to 8

By KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA
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REPORTER

The CNMI announced yesterday two new confirmed COVID-19 cases, bringing the CNMI's total to eight confirmed cases and one death.

According to the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force, two specimens that the Commonwealth Health Care Corp.

sent to Guam for testing came back positive for COVID-19.

The two new cases involve

See NMI on Page 4

AT A GLANCE

As of April 2, 2020

GUAM

Positive: 71*
(DPHSS), 6* (NHRC)
Recovered: 9
Deaths: 3

CNMI

Positive: 8
Pending: 10
Deaths: 1

*Tested by Guam Department of Public Health and Social Services Public Health Lab
**Tested by the Naval Health Research Center in California

Source: Joint Information Center—Guam, Commonwealth Health Care Corp

PSS to furlough teachers

By KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA
kimberly_bautista@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Public School System is in the process of furloughing its staff as its allocation from the CNMI government continues to plummet as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

According to Education

Commissioner Dr. Alfred Ada, plans are in the works to furlough staff but they are waiting for the best time to do so.

"We are planning. Plans are in the works. Timing is very important. I'm just planning on what are the possible scenarios because there is no

See PSS on Page 4

Trump OKs CNMI Disaster Declaration

By IVA MAURIN
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REPORTER

Federal emergency aid is now within reach of the CNMI, following President Donald J. Trump's declaration yesterday that a major disaster exists in the Commonwealth.

With the declaration, the

» **Commonwealth gets more federal assistance**

CNMI gains access to more resources as the government intensifies efforts to mitigate the threats of COVID-19.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency informed Gov. Ralph DLG Torres that the aid is now available to supplement the Commonwealth and local recovery efforts in areas affected

See DISASTER on Page 4

OFF LIMITS

As shown in this photo taken at Lao Lao Beach, public beaches are off limits even during non-curfew hours. Police have placed no-entry tapes in public beaches to discourage people from congregating in public areas as the CNMI mandates social distancing as a means to contain the spread of the novel coronavirus.

BEA CABRERA



Trump resists national shutdown, leaving it up to states

By AAMER MADHANI, ZEKE MILLER and ALAN FRAM
ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON (AP)—President Donald Trump is resisting calls to issue a national

stay-at-home order to stem the spread of the new coronavirus despite his administration's

projections that tens of thousands of Americans are likely to be killed by the disease. One by one, though, states are increasingly pushing shut-

down orders of their own.

Trump said Wednesday he wants to give governors' "flexibility" on whether a stay-

See SHUTDOWN on Page 4

INSIDE



LOCAL

Sailors aboard a US aircraft carrier where the coronavirus has spread will be taken off the ship.

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LOCAL

Although broadband has made much progress, tens of millions of people are still left out.

PAGE 7



NATION

New York's COVID-19 death count has more than doubled in 72 hours to 1,941.

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Local

Green card holders, CWs eligible for 'stimulus check'

By IVA MAURIN
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REPORTER

Legally employed workers who reside and work in the CNMI—such as green card holders and those with work visas such as CW, H-1B, H-2A—are eligible to receive a refundable tax credit, widely known as “stimulus checks.”

According to the guidance released by the Office of the Governor last Wednesday, non-U.S. citizens qualify for the stimulus checks as long as they are “living and working in the U.S.” and have a valid Social Security number.

Visitors and people who are in the U.S. illegally are excluded in the provision.

The CNMI was given access to the 2020 Recovery Rebates for Individuals, through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act that was enacted last March 27. It provides up to \$1,200 for eligible individuals, or up to \$2,400 for joint returns, and \$500 additional for each qualifying child.

Stimulus checks will be is-

Tax Filing Status:	Refundable Credit	Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) Threshold**
Single/Married Filing Separate/Qualifying Widow	\$1,200.00	\$75,000.00
Head of Household	\$1,200.00	\$112,500.00
Married Filing Joint	\$2,400.00	\$150,000.00
Each Qualifying Child	\$ 500.00	
“Qualifying Child” means a qualifying child of the taxpayer (as defined in section 152(c)) who has not attained age 17.		
**The amount of the refundable credit will be reduced by 5% of the amount exceeding the AGI threshold.		

sued via direct deposit, or by check mailed to the address indicated on the individual's 2018 income tax return, if the 2019 ITR has not been filed yet, or the individual's last known address. Taxpayers will not be contacted to provide bank account information.

To benefit immediately from this stimulus, an individual must have at least filed an income tax return for 2018.

Finance Secretary David DLG Atalig said that the stimulus package would assist every family in the Common-

wealth and is great news, especially as the CNMI weathers the economic downturn due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Atalig also expressed appreciation to the Division of Revenue & Taxation for working tirelessly to ensure taxpayers in the CNMI get the much-needed federal stimulus.

“This relief comes at a much-needed time, and I thank President Trump and the U.S. Congress for their work in taking care of the country, particularly their support of the CNMI, one of the hardest hit American communities as

a result of the global outbreak of COVID-19,” Gov. Ralph DLG Torres said.

The Office of the Governor is encouraging all residents with income, earned or unearned, to file a tax return, “especially pensioners and other individuals who typically do not have a filing requirement (income amounts equal to or less than the standard deduction amount allowed).”

Additional public guidance will be released by the Department of Finance prior to the disbursement of the stimulus checks.

IN IPI RAID LAST NOVEMBER

60 flash drives, 50-plus boxes of records seized

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

The Federal Bureau of Investigation and other U.S. government law enforcement officials seized a total of 160 data storage devices and more than 50 boxes of paper records during their raid on the Imperial Pacific International (CNMI) LLC's central offices in Puerto Rico in early November 2019, according to IPI general counsel Joey P. San Nicolas.

In his declaration in federal court, San Nicolas, who is a former CNMI attorney general, disclosed that federal agents seized in the raid almost all of IPI's then existing central office data storage devices, or flash drives.

San Nicolas filed his declaration last Monday in support of IPI's opposition to seven former workers' motion for sanctions against IPI.

The former workers, who are suing IPI and its contractor and subcontractor over the alleged injuries they suffered during accidents at the worksite of IPI's casino/resort project in Garapan, have asked the federal court to sanction IPI for allegedly violating the court's order.

The seven plaintiffs, through counsel Aaron Hale-

gua and Bruce Berline, said IPI has violated the U.S. District Court for the NMI's initial order to produce all discovery materials by Jan. 13, 2020.

Halegua and Berline said IPI has also now violated the stipulation ordered by the court requiring it to produce all discovery materials by Feb. 24, 2020.

The FBI was reportedly looking into possible violations of federal laws that involve Gov. Ralph DLG Torres, his family, IPI, and other persons, resulting in the execution of search warrants on several sites last Nov. 7 and 8.

In his declaration, San Nicolas said the devices seized were nine “All in Ones,” 92 mini CPUs, 21 laptops, 34 computer hard drives, a USB drive, two external hard drives, and a thumb drive.

When the FBI returned the devices to IPI last Jan. 23, 2020, but they were in a jumble, San Nicolas said. He said many of the devices were already unidentifiable as to their original source without time-consuming data analysis being performed by a competent IT

professional.

San Nicolas said the raid and seizure of the devices was apparently performed as part of a still pending federal law enforcement investigation, the overall scope of which IPI is not aware.

» San Nicolas says FBI returned devices in jumble last Jan. 23, refuses to return paper records

San Nicolas said because of the potential for the seized devices and the data which they stored being used in a federal law enforcement investigation and possible prosecution, and the attendant chain of custody concerns, IPI has not been able to simply put the devices back to work or download all of data onto a central server for analysis.

“Nor does the manner in which the devices were used lead to easy analysis,” said the lawyer, citing that none of the seized mini CPUs were assigned to a particular employee. Instead, San Nicolas said, the devices were set up in a pool within the IPI central office and were made available to employees on a first-come first-served basis, with the employees logging in using an employee number, not a name,

and then using the CPU for the day or perhaps only for a few minutes, depending on need.

He said the data on the CPUs is currently being analyzed but that their understanding is that some of IPI CPU's have a user list exceeding 30 current or former IPI employee numbers.

San Nicolas said their preliminary analysis indicates that the 160 devices hold a colossal amount of data, precisely how much is as yet unknown.

“Precisely what types of information this data is comprised of and how much of it is potentially relevant to this lawsuit is not yet clear,” he said.

With respect to the seizure of more than 50 boxes of paper records, San Nicolas said the U.S. government refuses to return such records to IPI despite IPI's requests.

He said because of the broad nature of the warrant that the federal agents were operating under and the general nature of the receipts that the FBI issued to IPI after the seizure, precisely what records were seized remains unclear to IPI.

In IPI's opposition to the motion for sanctions, IPI counsel Sean E. Frink said none of IPI's delayed production of requested documents or materials were due to willfulness, bad faith, or its fault. “This is an extremely complicated and unique discovery matter,” Frink said.

See RAID on Page 4



The Diocese of Chalan Kanoa has issued the following updated directives for implementation across all parishes in Saipan, Tinian and Rota this Holy Week (April 5 – 12, 2020):

■ No public Mass until further notice

■ All churches will be temporarily closed to the public until further notice.

■ Everyone is invited to participate in the online Mass via

□ Facebook @dioceseof-chalankanoa

§ Daily: 7am/5pm

§ Sunday: 7am/9am/11am/5pm

□ Cable TV Channel 6

§ Daily: 7am/5pm

§ Sunday: 7am/9am/11am/5pm

□ Radio on 1440am and 92.1 FM

§ Daily: 7am/ 10am/5pm

■ A 24-HOUR HELPLINE is now available

□ 284-4325 (284-HEAL)

The Clergy of the Diocese of Chalan Kanoa are available to provide Spiritual Support and/or answer questions about Anointing of the Sick, Last Rites, Confession, Mass schedules, Mass intentions, prayer requests, spiritual direction and other spiritual needs.

■ Everyone is highly encouraged to strictly practice Social Distancing.

The following will be observed during the Holy Week:

A. Palm Sunday (April 5)

No public blessing of palms. A separate time will be designated later in the year for actual blessing of palms in parishes.

Mass will be celebrated without congregation. Parishioners are invited to participate via Facebook, cable TV and/or radio. Live streaming will follow the updated Sunday schedule (see above).

B. Chrism Mass (April 8)

This celebration is postponed to a later date.

C. Holy Thursday (April 9)

Mass of the Lord's Supper will be celebrated without congregation. Parishioners are invited to participate via Facebook, cable TV and/or radio. Live streaming begins at 5pm

Following the decree from Congregation on Divine Worship and Discipline of Sacraments, parishioners are reminded of the following:

■ No washing of the feet

■ No transfer of the Blessed Sacrament to the Altar of Repose

■ No vigil and “Visita Iglesia”

D. Good Friday (April 10)
Schedule of worship services without congregation will be as follows:

■ Stations of the Cross at 8am

■ Divine Mercy at 12pm

■ Seven Last Words at 1pm
Parishioners are invited to participate via Facebook, cable TV and/or radio. Live streaming of all services will be as indicated.

Commemoration of the Lord's Passion, Veneration of the Cross, and Communion Service will be done without congregation.

Parishioners are invited to participate via Facebook, cable TV and/or radio. Live streaming begins at 3pm

Following the decree from Congregation on Divine Worship and Discipline of Sacraments, parishioners are reminded of the following:

■ No annual trek to Mt. Tapochao and similar activities in Rota and Tinian

■ No islandwide processions on all three islands

■ No veneration of the “San to Entiero”

E. Easter Vigil (April 11)

Vigil will be celebrated without congregation.

Parishioners are invited to participate via Facebook, cable TV and/or radio. Live streaming begins at 7pm

F. Easter Sunday (April 12)

Holy Eucharist will be celebrated without congregation.

Parishioners are invited to participate via Facebook, cable TV and/or radio. Live streaming will follow the updated Sunday schedule (see above).

In all celebrations the parishioners are reminded of the following:

■ Observe customary ways of disposing oneself when participating at Live broadcasts of Mass and other worship services as if one is attending physically at the church

■ Pray and reflect in silence

■ Sacrament of Reconciliation is highly encouraged. Contact the 24-hour helpline or your respective pastors to schedule a specific date and time.

Saipan casino op Imperial Pacific lost half-a-billion dollars in 2019

BY STEVEN STRADBROOKE
CALVINAYRE.COM

Saipan casino operator Imperial Pacific International (CNMI) LLC lost over half-a-billion dollars in 2019 as VIPs—particularly those that owe IPI money—steer well

clear of the property.

Figures released Wednesday by the Hong Kong-listed IPI show the company generated revenue of just over HK\$539 million (US\$69.5 million) in 2019, representing an 83.4% decline from 2018's result. Gross profit fell 89% to

HK\$319.8 million, resulting in an after-tax loss of HK\$3.94 billion (US\$508.2 million) for the year.

Last year's losses marked a significantly worse showing than 2018's \$378 million net loss, while the company's 2019 revenue was 15% below the

roughly \$82 million profit the company booked in 2017.

As usual, IPI's woes begin and end with its VIP market. While 2019's mass market table and slots revenue of HK\$249.6 million was only around 6% below 2018's tally, VIP gaming revenue fell by

more than 91% to HK\$253.8 million, barely eclipsing the mass market figure, as turnover tumbled 89% to just HK\$14 billion.

IPI has yet to strike any significant deals with junket operators, meaning the company is largely responsible

for offering credit to high-rolling gamblers. This also means that IPI is responsible for collecting on its VIP markers, a task the company has so far proven woefully incapable of managing.

IPI's total outstanding VIP markers stood at nearly HK\$9.1 billion at the end of 2019, of which the company chose to write off nearly HK\$7 billion as uncollectable. Over HK\$2.7 billion of these writeoffs were owed by IPI's 10 largest debtors, of which the largest deadbeat owed nearly HK\$1.1 billion.

On the plus side, 2019's write-offs mean the current outstanding debt is only HK\$2.1 billion, less than half of the sum that IPI still hoped to recover at the end of 2018.

The COVID-19 pandemic forced IPI to shut its gaming operations in mid-March, which on one hand means the company is no longer taking on any more VIP gambling debt but it's also generating no revenue.

It also means that the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands' government faces an even tougher challenge convincing IPI to make good on its estimated \$37 million in outstanding community fund contributions.

By IVA MAURIN
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REPORTER

Gov. Ralph DLG Torres and Lt. Gov. Arnold I. Palacios, yesterday, visited the Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services Station 1 in Susupe to personally thank and relay the community's gratefulness to the first responders in the Commonwealth's fight against COVID-19.

First responders include police officers, emergency medical technicians, physicians, nurses, firefighters, and many others who rush towards where there is a crisis, oftentimes, risking their own safety.

"Thank you for all the sacrifices," Torres said. "I wanted to say thank you from the bottom of my heart for all the sacrifices that you're doing and continue to do. We have a long way to go."

"Right now, I want to tell all of you...my concern is your safety and the safety of our community. At the end of the day, we all go home...to our families," the governor added.

Palacios echoed Torres' message and extended his gratitude to the families, and children, of first responders.

"On behalf of the greater Commonwealth community, thank you to each and everyone of you. We want you to know that we certainly appreciate your family, your children, for understanding. It's hard. There's no easy way to say this," he said.

Palacios also reminded all first responders to do whatever is necessary to be safe, to practice social distancing, and to follow all the directives that the government is asking the public to observe, in order to mitigate the spread

Thank you, first responders!



Gov. Ralph DLG Torres and Lt. Gov. Arnold I. Palacios pose with members of the Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services Station 1 in Susupe yesterday to personally thank and relay the community's gratefulness to the first responders in the Commonwealth's fight against COVID-19.

of COVID-19. "Take care of yourself, because if you take care of yourself, then you can take care of your family [and] you're going to be able to take

care of your community."

The lieutenant governor also asked the DFEMS management and leadership to be on top of the needs of all members of the DFEMS family.

"This is a global issue. The danger of this is exponential,

10 times, a hundred times, a thousand times more than what we are used to. ... Things are still evolving, new things come out everyday, but your community is grateful. The community depends on you to be safe," Palacios added.

USCIS closure extended to at least May 3

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services has extended until May 3 the temporary closure of its offices nationwide.

USCIS offices will begin to re-open on May 4 unless the public closures are extended further, the agency said in an announcement yesterday.

USCIS first suspended all routine face-to-face services with applicants at all of its offices on March 18, to protect its workforce and to help mitigate the spread of coronavirus.

The suspension covered all routine face-to-face services with applicants, including all interviews, naturalization ceremonies, and biometric collection appointments.

"However, we will continue to provide emergency services during this time. If you have an emergency service request, contact the USCIS Contact Center. Employees in these offices are continuing to perform mission-

essential services that do not require face-to-face contact with the public," the agency notice said.

USCIS field offices will send notices to applicants and petitioners with scheduled appointments impacted by the temporary public closure. Notices will also be sent to naturalization applicants scheduled for naturalization ceremonies. "We will resched-

ule all applicants when USCIS resumes normal operations," USCIS said. "USCIS asylum offices will send interview cancellation notices and automatically reschedule asylum interviews. When the interview is rescheduled, asylum applicants will receive a new interview notice with the new time, date and location of the interview. (USCIS)

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IN BRIDGE CAPITAL'S LAWSUIT

Ex-F&W director hires former AG as counsel

Former CNMI Fish and Wildlife director Sylvan O. Igisomar has hired former attorney general Matthew T. Gregory as his counsel in a land foreclosure lawsuit filed against him by Bridge Capital LLC.

Gregory has notified the Superior Court of his entry of appearance on behalf of Igisomar, who is now based in Virginia. Gregory asked the court to send him all pleadings and notices in this case.

Associate Judge Joseph N. Camacho is handling the case.

Bridge Capital, through counsel Daniel T. Guidotti, asked the court to hold Igisomar liable to pay at least \$827,568, consisting of \$605,000 in principal, and \$22,568 in accrued interest. If Igisomar fails to pay the full amount no later than 90 days after the day of judgment, then the court should order the sale of a land in Chalan Laulau that was used as the

mortgage lot in the case, Guidotti said. Igisomar is the sole fee simple owner of that land.

According to Guidotti in the complaint, Bridge Capital lent \$550,000 to Initiative, Intelligence, Innovations, Investment—CNMI, LLC (4Is) on Dec. 15, 2018. To induce Bridge Capital to lend money, 4Is asked Concepcion O. Igisomar to provide security for the sums advanced to 4Is, Guidotti said.

He said in exchange for \$54,400 and as security for 4Is' repayment of



Gregory

sums due under the promissory note, Concepcion Igisomar mortgaged her entire interest in the Chalan Laulau lot to Bridge Capital through a mortgage instrument dated Dec. 18, 2015.

Concepcion was the sole owner of the lot at the time she gave the mortgage to Bridge Capital.

As of Dec. 31, 2019, the total amount due under the note is \$827,565, Guidotti said.

On May 4, 2016, Concepcion Igisomar transferred her entire interest in the mortgaged lot to Sylvan Igisomar. The lawyer said that because Sylvan Igisomar failed to pay the entire balance due under the note, Bridge Capital is entitled to foreclose on the lot. *(Ferdie de la Torre)*



NEW RESCUE VEHICLES

The CNMI Department of Public Safety received two rescue vehicles yesterday from the Law Enforcement Support Office. The four-wheeled vehicles—called Mine-Resistant Ambush Protected vehicles—will be used for future emergency response situations including any future rescue missions.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

SHUTDOWN

From Page 1

at-home policy is the best option for their constituents, but acknowledged that he's looking at limiting air and rail travel between hot spots within the United States. The president remains hesitant to press a unified policy even after the White House released "sobering" new projections on Tuesday that 100,000 to 240,000 Americans will likely succumb to the coronavirus even if current social distancing guidelines are maintained.

Surgeon General Jerome Adams said Wednesday the nation's federalist system leaves much of the authority on how to properly respond to

catastrophes to individual state governors and local officials.

"We trust the governors and the mayors to understand their people and understand whether or not they feel like they can trust the people in their states to make the right decisions," Adams said on ABC's "Good Morning America."

On Wednesday alone, five more states — Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, Nevada and Pennsylvania — added or expanded their stay-at-home orders.

But the invocation of federalism in the midst of a crisis that threatens a nationwide body count on par with some of the deadliest American wars suggests that Trump and his advisers are cognizant of the political ramifications of their response. Republican

governors in states like Florida, Texas and Nebraska have questioned the necessity of applying strong social distancing rules to rural or exurban areas that haven't reported much evidence of the virus so far.

The lack of a unified, 50-state response also collides with evidence emerging that coronavirus infections are being spread by people who have no clear symptoms, complicating efforts to gain control of the pandemic. A study conducted by researchers in Singapore and published by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention on Wednesday is the latest to estimate that around 10% of new coronavirus infections may be spread by people who were infected with the virus but not experiencing symptoms.

many who might not even know that they're carriers

"I know I'm not a frontliner like nurses and doctors, but I do come in contact with a lot of people every day. I'm scared because I have children to take care of. What if I get sick? What if they get sick. My mother is old, she is the most critical with this virus," she said.

She added that, although there are social distancing rules in place and that she is equipped with masks and gloves, and has alcohol, there's still a possibility of contracting the virus.

"If doctors and nurses get infected around the world, what more a cashier who only has a cotton mask and 70% alcohol as defense," she said.

CHCC continues to work with the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force to expand designated isolation areas to closely monitor the wellbeing of individuals with symptoms.

Some of the confirmed cases have come in contact with those who have a travel history from a location with confirmed COVID-19 cases. Other

cases have had no recent travel history or no evident indication of coming in contact with someone who is positive for COVID-19.

The new finding of cases occurring among those without close contact suggests that COVID-19 community transmission is occurring on Saipan. Community transmission means people have been infected within the community and not just imported from another COVID-19 outbreak jurisdiction.

COVID-19 in Guam

The Department of Public Health and Social Services tested 41 individuals for COVID-19 on April 1. Six tested positive and 35 tested negative.

The Guam overall count also includes six positive cases that were tested by the Naval Health Research Center in San Diego.

This brings Guam's COVID-19 count up to 77, 37 being female and 40 being male, with three deaths.

Most of Guam COVID-19 known positive cases have epidemiological links to other confirmed cases.

DISASTER

From Page 1

by the COVID-19 pandemic beginning on Jan. 20, 2020.

FEMA Region IX administrator Robert J. Fenton will serve as the federal coordinating officer for federal recovery operations in the affected area.

"Lt. Gov. [Arnold] Palacios and I are sincerely grateful for the continued support and assistance from the White House and FEMA," the governor said. "We've been working closely with [Trump, Fenton], and the White House as they reviewed

my request for a major disaster declaration for the CNMI."

According to the Office of the Governor, the funding is available "to the territorial and eligible local governments, and certain private nonprofit organizations, on a cost-sharing basis for emergency protective measures (Category B), including direct federal assistance under Public Assistance, for all areas affected by COVID-19 at a federal cost share of 75 percent."

The governor's additional requests, such as access to the Individual Assistance and Hazard Mitigation Grant programs, are still being reviewed by FEMA and the White House.

PSS

From Page 1

money coming in," he said.

Ada said that he and his staff have explored all possible options and that furloughing teachers and other personnel seems to be the best option.

"The three options I am looking at are to furlough, continue with a payless payday, or layoffs. With layoffs, we need to give them 90-day notice, so I still have to find the money to pay them for those 90 days. For the payless Fridays, they're not getting paid so their scope of work changes. If you don't get paid, then you don't work. [With] furloughing, they still have their jobs," he said.

Ada said that furloughing staff is the best option and they are just waiting on assurance from the federal government that there will be assistance for those who lose their jobs as a result of COVID-19 under the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act.

"We are waiting on the federal aid to be approved before we implement furloughs. It's the best that I can do. With the supplemental, once we have the assurance, we will plan accordingly," said Ada.

Gov. Ralph DLG Torres signed an agreement last Sunday afternoon with the U.S. Department of Labor to implement the Pandemic Unemployment Assistance for CNMI workers who were affected by the economic downturn caused by COVID-19.

Pandemic Unemployment Assistance, which is provided under the recently enacted CARES Act, provides emergency unemployment assistance to workers who do not have unemployment insurance, which is not available in the U.S. territories.

The program will provide eligible workers weekly unemployment checks and jobless benefits for up to nine months.

Last March 27, President Donald J. Trump signed into law the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act.

RAID

From Page 2

He said IPI has proceeded diligently and in good faith, assigning 11 employees and a contractor, in order to comply with its discovery obligations in this case, and has made significant progress.

Frink said IPI, for the first time in its existence, faces a very complicated and unique e-discovery universe. He said the FBI raids and the related issues, the extremely complicated issues involved with IPI's ESI storage and access issues, the Chinese language overlay to the entire operation, prior lack of counsel experience with e-discovery, prior IPI counsel Kelley Butcher's unexpected family demands, and high IPI personnel turnover, has made the production a uniquely complicated one.

Despite these issues, IPI has made strides in meeting its discov-

ery obligations, Frink said, admittedly at times past the court-ordered deadlines.

Second, Frink said, no one can seriously dispute that the discovery path is fraught with uncertainty because of the COVID-19 pandemic cloud. "If it comes down to having to choose between IPI personnel and contractor (including counsel) personal health or safety versus meeting plaintiffs' mandated discovery deadlines, the choice will be an obvious one," Frink said.

He said the plaintiffs' request that the court impose a prospective \$5,000 a day fine under such a circumstances "is draconian." The lawyer said the economic and related very real human repercussions from a complete shutdown of the CNMI's only significant industry, tourism, are only now starting to reverberate through the Commonwealth and its people and businesses, and cannot yet be reasonably predicted.

NMI

From Page 1

a 55-year-old male and a 31-year-old male. Both have no recent travel history, are in stable condition, and remain in isolation.

As of April 2, the CNMI has submitted 33 specimens for COVID-19 testing to the Guam Public Health Laboratory. Of the 33 specimens, 23 have been processed, resulting in eight positives and 15 negatives. CHCC is still awaiting the results of 10 specimens.

Both newly confirmed cases are being closely monitored by CHCC medical teams. CHCC has also initiated contact tracing for the most immediate contacts like close family members, friends, and associates.

According to a 42-year-old local cashier, who requested her name and her place of work be withheld, she's been having trouble sleeping at night with the number of positive cases rising and knowing that she has to go to work every day and be around



Why we voted 'No'

Now more than ever is when we all have to come together as one community

What I have learned during this most difficult moment in our existence as a commonwealth is we have each other to lean on. The onset of the coronavirus and COVID-19 and its fast-phase spread into our small community exposes us all to a potential risk (likelihood) of exposure. OUR COMMONWEALTH is presented with a challenge of historic proportion; never before experienced. Our way of life has been altered.

When will this end and how our economy will recover remains uncertain.

The impact this dreaded contagion has brought upon us is both staggering and unprecedented.

What is certain, however, is we are still in this together.

As a firm believer in communication, I am writing to once again reiterate why we all have to put aside our disagreements and differences as stakeholders of public education.

During our March 28, 2020 Board of Education meeting, we acted on an item on agenda, which was to send out a letter to the CNMI Department of Finance. That letter was voted/passed, with 3 'yes', and with 2 'no' votes (myself and my esteemed colleague from Rota, the Vice Chairman Sgt. Maj. Herman Atalig).

Our 'no' vote was primarily based on one ground: Now, more than ever, is not the right time to be hostile at each other, individually and or, collectively, as a government instrumentality.

The CNMI Public School System's Office of Budget and Finance agrees with the CNMI Department of Finance's recommendation that government revenues for this fiscal 2020 had to be revised, to reflect on the actual state of the economy. The resources to fund government operation and public services are no longer reflective of the current dire situation. It is not enough to get us through the remainder of this fiscal year, and potentially, even the next fiscal year.

I firmly believe that the letter to the CNMI Department of Finance was drafted to be combative and threatening. This is not a representation of how we can effectively communicate to our partners in government.

Not now especially when we know that we cannot realistically achieve our goal to secure needed funds vital to our initiatives to jumpstart public education services under the current public health crisis.

Now more than ever is when we see the importance and value of communication and teamwork.

What we need to do is to retool and fight this crisis together. We only have each other at this most difficult moment.

We are facing this crisis as one commonwealth. I continuously appeal to all that it should be our collective resolve to solve this problem together.

Let us continue to build trust and not animosity. Let us work together in partnership—an extraordinary way of showing our support that we are one with the rest of our community during this difficult moment we are facing.

In this moment of critical need, I and Vice Chairman Atalig are with all of you optimistic that we will survive this if we all stand next to each other, as partners and as one island community.

Let us show the best in us during this time of unprecedented crisis.

Thank you.

Let us show solidarity not animosity

As the CNMI Board of Education Vice Chairman, I am writing to express my opposition to the letter we addressed to CNMI Secretary of Finance, David Atalig. This was as a result from our special boarding meeting on March 28, 2020.

The substance of the letter did not offer best ideas or solutions to the Public School System's funding needs. Instead, the letter exposes our lack of tact during this critical public health crisis.

The growing threat of coronavirus puts everyone's life at stake. We, as education leaders and policymakers, must join hands with the rest of the CNMI government and our people to fight this dreaded disease from inflicting more lives.

It is very unfortunate that some of our leaders and policymakers opt to view this as an opportunity to add salt to injury; take advantage of the current public health crisis, and threaten our central government.

With the declaration of public health emergency, we cannot continue to insist and demand for what is owed to us. Instead, let us ask ourselves: What is it that we can do to help the community as a whole during this most-challenging period of our existence as a commonwealth?

Lets change this mindset of ours. Rather than be combative, let's show support.

I am hopeful that my PSS family will not feel that I am unwilling to fight for us as some perceived during the meeting.

My position is quite different. My experience during the Vietnam War has guided and helped me with decision-making. It allows me to think thinking rationally and thoughtfully.

In times of conflict, we should know our enemy and their fighting capabilities. I also learned that in a time of peace, we must resolve our differences in a humble and cooperative manner. Our government is not our enemy.

Let us not go into battle when we know we are not going to win. This confrontational approach will not lead us to victory. Our culture taught us the importance of respect, selflessness, and compassion. This is who we are and I pray who we continue to be.

With our current State of Emergency with the COVID19 pandemic at our doorstep, I do not believe it is the right time to resort to litigation. Rather, we should discuss this in a civil and afford each other with respect. We cannot continue to have an adversarial relationship with the "hands that feed us." We need to make peace with our government leaders and negotiate wisely, plan smartly and genuinely understand our current situation in this time of crisis.

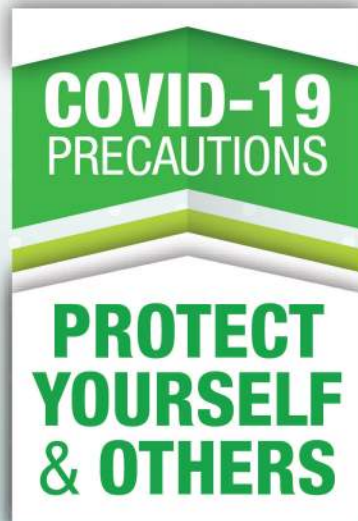
There is hope with the forthcoming economic stimulus bill that was just signed by President Trump. It behooves us to be patient and understanding as things are changing every minute. Now more than ever, we must be united as "One Marianas" as we all fight this unprecedented invisible enemy.

We should instead show solidarity as ONE PSS familia, as one CNMI community.

I pray for our health and safety. God Bless and Godspeed as we are all in it together.



By Janice Marie Ada-Tenorio
Chairwoman
CNMI Board of Education



By Sgt. Maj. Herman Atalig (Ret)
Vice Chairman
CNMI Board of Education

Nearly 3,000 sailors to leave carrier amid virus outbreak

By LOLITA C. BALDOR
ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON (AP)—Nearly 3,000 sailors aboard a U.S. aircraft carrier where the coronavirus has spread will be taken off the ship by Friday, Navy officials said as they struggle to quarantine crewmembers in the face of an outbreak.

So far, fewer than 100 of the nearly 5,000 sailors assigned to the USS *Theodore Roosevelt*, now docked in Guam, have tested positive for the virus, but the Navy is moving sailors into various facilities and probably will begin using hotel rooms in the coming days. Navy leaders are talking with government

officials in the U.S. territory to identify rooms for the crew members.

Acting Navy Secretary Thomas Modly, however, made it clear Wednesday that while several thousand will leave the ship, other sailors will remain on board in order to continue to protect the ship and run critical systems.

“We cannot and will not remove all sailors from the ship,” Modly told Pentagon reporters. He said officials will send as many sailors off the ship as possible while still maintaining safety. He said about 1,000 have gone ashore, and that number will grow to at least 2,700 in a couple of days.

Modly and Adm. Michael Gilday, the chief of naval



In this April 13, 2018, file photo the USS *Theodore Roosevelt* aircraft carrier is anchored off Manila Bay west of Manila, Philippines.

family and I are extremely concerned about the plight of the sailors and captain of the USS *Theodore Roosevelt*,” Tweed Roosevelt, a great-grandson of President Theodore Roosevelt and chairman of the Theodore Roosevelt Institute at Long Island University, wrote in an email Wednesday. “We must get these brave men and women off at once to protect their lives and the future viability of the ship.”

In a memo to Navy leaders over the weekend, Crozier said the spread of the disease was accelerating and that removing all but 10% of the crew would be a “necessary risk” in order to stop the spread of the virus.

“We are not at war. Sailors do not need to die. If we do not act now, we are failing to properly take care of our most trusted asset our sailors,” said Crozier.

Navy leaders were quick to praise the captain for bringing the dire nature of the matter to their attention. They brushed away suggestions that he could be punished because the issue became public so quickly.

In Asia, a carrier presence is central to what the Pentagon has identified as a fundamental shift from fighting insurgent and extremist conflicts in the Middle East to a return to “great power competition.” That means, principally, a bigger focus on China, including its militarization of disputed areas of the South China Sea.

Navy leaders faced persistent questions about the origin of the virus on the ship, but said it may be impossible to identify where it started.

The *Roosevelt* made a port call in Vietnam last month. Modly said the stop, where thousands of sailors likely went off the ship into Danang, was done when there was fewer than 20 cases of the illness in Hanoi and sailors were screened when they returned to the ship.

He said two sailors fell ill near the end of the required 14-day period between port calls, and they were flown off the ship. As the days went by, however, the problem worsened.

Modly said there are 94 Navy ships deployed at sea around the world, and the *Roosevelt* is the only one with sailors who have tested positive for the virus. Some other sailors have tested positive, but those have been in other jobs or on ships that are at their home bases and are not out at sea.

As of Tuesday morning, the Navy said that a total of 334 personnel had tested positive for the virus, including 243 sailors. Of the 334, 19 have been hospitalized and 15 have recovered. None has died.

PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
COMMONWEALTH HEALTHCARE CORPORATION

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)
RFP20-CHCC/OD2A-002

NEW SUBMISSION DEADLINE: APRIL 6, 2020 TIME: 10:00 AM

“PROCUREMENT OF ONE (1) MULTI-FUNCTION DIGITAL COLOR COPIER/NETWORK PRINTER/SCANNER”

INTERESTED PARTIES CAN DOWNLOAD THIS REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)/INVITATION TO BID (ITB) FROM THE CHCC WEBSITE [WWW.CHCC.GOV.MP]. ONCE AT THE SITE, NAVIGATE TO **RFP's** TAB ON THE BOTTOM NAVIGATION BAR. CLICK ON THE URL FOR THIS RFP/ITB. YOU WILL BE REQUIRED TO ENTER DATA TO ALLOW US TO TRACK ALL REQUESTS FOR THIS OPPORTUNITY.

THE CHCC RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY AND ALL PROPOSAL AND TO WAIVE ANY IMPERFECTIONS IN ANY PROPOSAL, IF TO DO SO SHALL BE IN THE INTEREST OF THE CHCC. ALL PROPOSALS SHALL BECOME THE EXCLUSIVE PROPERTY OF THE COMMONWEALTH HEALTHCARE CORPORATION.

/s/ ESTHER L. MUNA
CHCC CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

/s/ CORAZON P. ADA
CHCC DIRECTOR OF P&S

Commonwealth Utilities Corporation
Office of the Executive Director

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
CUC-IFB-19-036, REV. 1

MANNED SECURITY and ELECTRONIC MONITORING SERVICES

The Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC), Office of the Executive Director is soliciting competitive bids from qualified firms to provide Manned Security and Electronic Monitoring Services for various sites at CUC, Saipan and Rota, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

Prospective Bidders must pre-register with the CUC Procurement & Supply Division. The Bid Package may be obtained from the CUC Procurement and Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Saipan, between 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except on government observed holidays, upon completion of registration and presentation of a receipt evidencing a non-refundable payment to the CUC Treasury Section, by cash, check or credit card in the amount of **\$100.00** (non-refundable) for one IFB package set. If you have previously purchased CUC-IFB-19-036, no purchase is needed but will still have to register in order to receive the package.

Contractors must provide proof of “Indemnity Liability Insurance,” specifically covering security workers assigned to CUC’s compound. Coverage must be a minimum of \$200,000.00. The Contractor shall agree to and indemnify and hold CUC harmless from and against all liability, loss, damage or injury, and all cost and expenses (including attorneys’ fees and costs of any suit related thereto) suffered or incurred by the Cooperative, arising from or related to Contractor’s negligent performance under the contract.

Proponents shall provide a certification signed by a principal of the company stating that the company is currently in full compliance with all applicable CNMI and Federal Labor Laws and has been for the past Five (5) years. Proponents shall submit a listing of all of its employees (US & Foreign) with corresponding job titles and a certification of good standing from the CNMI Department of Labor. Failure of the company to provide the certification is grounds to reject the entire Bid.

One (1) original and Five (5) hard copies must be submitted in a sealed envelope marked “*CUC-IFB-19-036-Rev.1*, Security Guard Services”, to the CUC Procurement & Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, P.O. Box 501220, Saipan, MP 96950, **no later than 10:00 AM (ChST, Saipan Time) on April 14, 2020**. Late submissions of Bids will not be considered.

This Invitation for bids does not commit CUC to the award of a contract or contracts, nor to pay any cost incurred in the preparation and submission of Bid in anticipation of a contract. This request and the ensuing contract shall be executed pursuant to the CUC Procurement Regulations. The contractor shall be required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal Laws. All responses to this Invitation for bids should take into account any and all taxes, including excise tax, which will become the obligation of the Proponent, awarded a contract.

All Proponents are advised that CUC assumes no responsibility in any act of omission on the part of the Proponents due to lack of information or understanding of the Bid requirements in the course of Contractor’s preparation of a Bid under the contract.

Questions or requests for clarification will be entertained only from registered Proponents and must be submitted in writing no later than **10:00 AM (ChST, Saipan Time) on March 25, 2020** to Manny B. Sablan, CUC Purchasing Administrator via email address manny.sablan@cucgov.org with a copy to John Mafnas, CUC Contracting Specialist via email address john.mafnas@cucgov.org and Christie Sablan, CUC P&S, Purchasing Technician, Senior – christie.sablan@cucgov.org.

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all bids for any reason and waive any defects in the said bids, if in its sole opinion, to do so would be in the best interest of CUC. All bids submitted shall become the property of CUC.

GARY P. CAMACHO
Executive Director

MANNY BOYER SABLAN
Purchasing Administrator

COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY
Main Office: FRANCISCO C. ADA/SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
P.O. BOX 501055, SAIPAN MP 96950-1055
Phone: (670) 237-6500/1 • Fax (670) 234-5962
E-mail Address: cpa.admin@pticom.com • Website: www.cpa.gov.mp

REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATION STATEMENTS FOR ARCHITECTURAL/ENGINEERING DESIGN SERVICES

TINIAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT PARKING LOT EXPANSION PROJECT NO. CPA-TA-001-20

The Commonwealth Ports Authority (CPA) is soliciting statements of professional qualifications from interested Consultants for Architectural and Engineering (A/E) Design Services for expansion of the parking lot at the Tinian International Airport on the island of Tinian, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

The project is being funded by CPA. This project is in accordance with CPA’s Procurement Rules and Regulations and procedures shall be in full compliance with Section 40-50-202 Architect-Engineer Design and Construction Management Services.

The Request for Qualification (RFQ) Package is available at CPA’s Office of the Executive Director, 2nd floor of the arrival terminal. No fee is required for obtaining the proposal package.

Questions regarding this request for RFQ are to be submitted to Ms. Wendi L. Prater, CPA Executive Assistant/Project Manager, via hand delivery to the CPA Administration Office, faxed to (670) 234-5962 or emailed to wprater@cpa.gov.mp by no later than Friday, March 27, 2020, 5:00 p.m., local time.

Interested Consultants are requested to submit one (1) original, four (4) copies and one (1) electronic version in .pdf of their statements of professional qualifications no later than **5:00 p.m., THURSDAY, APRIL 16, 2020**. Statements of qualification must be presented by a combination of both brochures and the use of current U.S. Government Standard Form 330.

The statements of professional qualification will be evaluated based on the criteria available in the RFQ package.

The CPA reserves the right to reject any or all statements of professional qualification for any reason, if in its sole opinion to do so would be in its best interest.

/s/ CHRISTOPHER S. TENORIO
Executive Director

Date: March 11, 2020

Those without broadband struggle in a stuck-at-home nation

By TALI ARBEL and
MICHAEL CASEY
ASSOCIATED PRESS

NEW YORK (AP)—In Sandwich, New Hampshire, a town of 1,200 best known as a setting for the movie “On Golden Pond,” broadband is scarce. Forget streaming Netflix, much less working or studying from home. Even the police department has trouble uploading its reports.

Julie Dolan, a 65-year-old retiree in Sandwich, has asthma. Her husband has high blood pressure. Dolan doubts her substandard home internet could manage a remote medical appointment, and these days no one wants to visit the doctor if they can help it. That leaves 19th-century technology -- her landline phone. “That is all I would have,” she says.

As schools, workplaces and public services shut down in the age of coronavirus, online connections are keeping Americans in touch with vital institutions and each other. But that’s not much of an option when fast internet service is hard to come by.

Although efforts to extend broadband service have made progress in recent years, tens of millions of people are still left out, largely because phone and cable companies hesitate to invest in far-flung rural areas. Government subsidies in the billions haven’t fully fixed the problem.

Many more simply can’t afford broadband. U.S. broadband costs more than in many comparable countries—an average of \$58 a month compared to \$46.55 across 29 nations, according to a 2018 Federal Communications Commission report.

Such disconnected people “already have to work harder to tread water,” said Chris Mitchell, who advocates for community broadband service at the Institute for Local Self-Reliance. “I don’t think people appreciated the magnitude of the problem.”

Even in cities, the high cost of internet access means many go without. Low-cost local alternatives such as libraries and cafes have shut down.

In St. Louis, Stella Ashcraft, 63, lives from check to check and can’t afford internet. Her senior center, where she plays bingo, does puzzles and gets lunch five days a week, is closed. So is her church and the library where she checks email. She’s gotten texted photos of her newborn grandchild, but forget about a Zoom call to see the baby.

“I feel very withdrawn, isolated, alone,” she said.

There are no definitive numbers on those without broadband. The FCC puts the



In this March 17, 2020 photo Olivia Bucks, left, helps her son Keith Bucks, center, with an online class assignment while Ashton Morris, right, works on a handwriting lesson from their first grade class at Arco Iris Spanish Immersion School in Beaverton, Ore.

number at 21 million, but its data is faulty and most likely undercounts the problem. An independent group called BroadbandNow pegs it at 42 million. The digital divide disproportionately affects rural areas, African Americans, Latinos and Native Americans on tribal lands.

Phone and cable companies have pledged not to cut people off if they can’t pay bills and opened their Wi-Fi hotspots to the public. Some are expanding low-cost programs for poor people and lifting data caps so more people can get and stay connected.

Millions of Americans working from home are learning to use online video in place of face-to-face meetings, but that’s not an option for those with only a trickle of

data service.

Brie Morrissey, who owns a building outfitted with broadband in Dublin, New Hampshire, would prefer to maintain social distance by working from home. But she keeps heading into the office for the connection, and as a result, is constantly cleaning the place -- wiping down door knobs, the bathroom sinks and “every inch of the building,” she says.

Morrissey avoids other tenants and won’t rent space to anyone else. Most people recover from the virus, but the elderly and those with underlying conditions are more likely to get seriously ill or die.

“I have to tell people to stay home and that we can’t accommodate them, which is a hard thing to do for a small

business owner in a small town,” she said. “You obviously want to help. But following guidelines means for the most part we can’t.”

Students, meanwhile, struggle with a “homework gap” when they can’t get or submit assignments, much less watch online lectures or participate in discussions. Online schoolwork is now the norm, but the millions of students who don’t have

home internet or access to computers at home require creative solutions as schools shut down.

In rural western Alabama, less than 1% of Perry County’s roughly 9,100 residents have high-quality internet at home, so online lessons are out. County teachers spent three days manually loading scanned images of math worksheets and other materials on to iPads and Chromebooks for the system’s 1,100 students to take home while out of class, said Superintendent John Heard.

A New York City family shelter has no Wi-Fi and 175 school-age children, only 15 of whom have laptops. City schools are sending some kids tablets equipped with internet service. But Estrella Montanez, who runs the shelter, worries that kids will have trouble managing remote work.

“Many families are not so tech-savvy,” she said.

Lawmakers want the federal government to send schools and libraries more money to lend out Wi-Fi hotspots to students. But the FCC says it’s not authorized to do that under current law and is discussing a solution with Congress.

On Navajo Nation, the country’s largest Native American reservation, it’s common to see people sitting in their vehicles at night outside local government centers, fast-food restaurants and grocery stores to connect to Wi-Fi. Diné College is lending laptops to students and asking internet providers to improve service.

Digital-access advocates hope that this crisis propels the government to do more to get people connected. In some places, relief was expected later this year. But that’s too late to help with the current crisis.

A cable company is supposed to start servicing Berkshires town Peru, Massachusetts, later this year. State Rep. Paul Mark has only satellite internet now, though, and that doesn’t let him videoconference. Even Facebook video is a strain. And, like many others in his area, he also has unreliable mobile service at home. To help his constituents, he has to get in his car and drive around to get on calls and go on local TV and radio.

“It’s a hassle,” he said during a recent phone interview from his car as he drove to the Boston statehouse. Then the line went dead.



DUCK BOAT/BUS (AMPHIBIOUS) NOTICE OF AUCTION/BIDDING

1945 GMC DUKW Model: Body Style: Bus/Boat
Color: Changed from Yellow color to Camouflage
Weight: 7816: Cylinder: 6: Capacity: 34 Passengers

For more Information

Please contact Bank of Guam counsel, Robert T. Torres at (670) 234-7859/234-5750.
Email: robert.torres@rttlawgroup.com. Any reasonable bid will be accepted as there is no minimum bid. Bid submissions will be closed at 4 pm on May 15, 2020. Bid(s) opening shall be at 4:30 p.m. on May 15, 2020. Bank of Guam reserves the right to reject any and all offer(s). A “Duck Boat” bid form can be obtained from Bank of Guam through Counsel at Robert T. Torres Attorney at Law, Chalan Kiya P.O. Box 503758 CK Saipan, MP 96950.

Bid Instruction

1. This is a private auction/bidding on behalf of the Bank of Guam. The bidding will be conducted through the Law Office of Robert T. Torres using a written/sealed bid process. However, the Bank reserves the right to reject any and all offers including any offer not determined to be commercially reasonable. Bids may be submitted to the Law Office of Robert T. Torres in Chalan Kiya, Saipan.
2. The Duck Boat/Bus is offered for bid and sale “as is” and without any warranty or guarantee as to fitness for use and each bidder is on notice to research this specialized and particular unit as an amphibious craft and the conditions in which it may be used in the CNMI or in other locations.
3. Inspections: Any person wishing to inspect the unit may contact the Law Office of Robert T. Torres to inspect the unit located at Torres Refrigeration on Airport Road.
4. If a bid is accepted, the winning bidder shall tender the full amount upon notice and take delivery. Otherwise the next highest bidder shall be considered. The Bank of Guam reserves the right to cancel the bid and resell/re-auction the unit.
5. The payment for the sales shall be by Cash or Cashier's Check. Personal checks/company checks are not accepted.
6. All bids are final.

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THE LAW OFFICES OF MICHAEL A. WHITE, LLC
POST OFFICE BOX 5222
SAIPAN, MARIANA ISLANDS 96950
TEL: (670) 234-6547
FAX: (670) 234-9537

ATTORNEY FOR Petitioner

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

In the Matter of the Estate of:	CIVIL ACTION NO. 20-0093
HERMAN MUNA MANGLONA,	
also known as	
HERMAN M. MANGLONA, SR.,	
Deceased.	

SECOND AMENDED NOTICE

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that Diego M. Masga has filed a Petition for Letters of Administration upon the Estate of Herman Muna Manglona, also known as Herman M. Manglona Sr., deceased; and that the said petition will be heard by the Court on JUNE 18, 2020, at the hour of 10:00 a.m.

DATED: March 27, 2020

/s/ MICHAEL A. WHITE,
ESQ., F0122
Attorney for Petitioner

MICHAEL A. WHITE, ESQ. F0122
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ATTORNEY FOR Petitioner

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

In the Matter of the Estate of:	CIVIL ACTION NO. 20-0072
DONALD BUFTON,	
Deceased.	

SECOND AMENDED NOTICE

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that Diego M. Masga has filed a Petition for Letters of Administration upon the Estate of Donald Bufton, deceased; and that the said petition will be heard by the Court on JUNE 18, 2020, at the hour of 10:00 a.m.

DATED: March 27, 2020

/s/ MICHAEL A. WHITE,
ESQ., F0122
Attorney for Petitioner

Opinion

Hafa Adair

Saipan Tribune

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AP The Associated Press

Pacific Islands News Association

EDITORIAL

To wear a mask or not to wear a mask. It's no longer a question

I wore a face mask outside for the first time Tuesday morning. It wasn't a new one; I purchased it last summer to clean out a critter infestation.

In the last few weeks, as the coronavirus spread rapidly across the nation, I thought frequently about wearing it outside. But I never did, and not just because it was dusty and pinched at my face.

Truthfully, I was embarrassed. For starters, it feels weird to wear a mask in public in this country, unless you're in a hospital or a doctor's waiting room. It's kind of stigmatizing, actually—an exercise in drawing unwanted attention. Then there was the shame doled out by federal officials and public health experts, who said people who hoarded medical grade face masks such as my N95 during a national shortage put health care providers at risk for infection.

"Seriously people—STOP BUYING MASKS! They are NOT effective in preventing (the) general public from catching #Coronavirus," Surgeon General Jerome Adams tweet-yelled at Americans on Feb. 29, saying that healthy people did not need to wear face masks.

What nudged me to finally swallow my shame and take up the mask was the news that the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, at the urging of public health experts, is now considering recommending that all Americans don some sort of face protection—though not medical grade face masks—while outside to slow the transmission of the coronavirus.

The reversal may seem puzzling. At some level, we all probably understood that having a barrier between our germ hands and our vulnerable faces was a good idea during an outbreak, no matter what the official recommendation was. But it's another example of how the understanding of this new disease, and how to fight it, is still evolving.

Back when there were just a handful of confirmed cases of COVID-19 in the U.S., it seemed appropriate to urge people to leave the masks for health care workers who really needed them. But we now have more evidence suggesting that people can spread COVID-19 before they know they are infected and need to isolate themselves. Also, since there's no shortage of do-it-yourself face mask tutorials online, regular people can cover their faces without depriving a doctor or nurse of much-needed infection protection.

Still, of all the things that government has asked us to do—not shake hands, stay at home, keep 6 feet away from other people—wearing face protection outside is perhaps the most culturally alien to Americans. We just don't do that unless we are robbing a bank or the temperature has dropped below zero.

But there are signs that all these steps, as uncomfortable as they may be, are working to slow the spread of COVID-19 infections in Washington state and California. If covering up my face in public will help to flatten the COVID-19 curve even further, then I'll be wearing my mask on the next trip to the grocery store as well.

© 2020 Los Angeles Times



America's lack of pandemic preparedness is unforgivable

In the movies, this all goes very differently. In Hollywood's version of events, the federal government had been building a secret bunker in the limestone cliffs of Missouri to house a million people in the expectation of an extinction level event.

Or the entire executive and legislative branches were relocated to an underground facility in Virginia where continuity of government could be preserved, and, I suppose, lawmakers weren't still using the public gym during a pandemic.

Even in the all-too-real scripted version of coronavirus-the-movie, "Contagion," the CDC has identified a stadium that can be turned into a triage facility—on Day 12 of the outbreak.

If only this were one of those movies.

As we try to adjust to a total stoppage of life as we know it due to the spread of COVID-19, the lack of preparedness by the federal government is utterly and indefensibly unfathomable.

We've watched the president of the United States first dismissing the severity of the crisis, his own experts contradicting him publicly; confusion over the responsibilities of the federal government versus individual states; governors fighting with the White House for supplies; a shortage of personal protective equipment for our doctors on the front lines; hospitals overwhelmed with patients; Congress playing politics with relief funding.

How could one of the wealthiest and powerful countries on the planet be this behind the curve?

From the simplest of tools—like a disaster supply chain org chart—to the most complex and sophisticated pandemic readiness plans, it seems as though the United States had next to nothing in place.

And even more galling, there were too many warnings to count.

Starting way back in 2005, the George W. Bush administration published a pandemic plan, which said that medical supplies should be distributed from the Strategic National Stockpile in the event of an outbreak. In 2009, a federal task force recommended that the Obama administration replenish that stockpile of N95 protective face masks, which had been depleted during that year's swine flu outbreak. It did not.

Flash forward to 2017, seven days before Donald Trump took office. Obama administration officials simulated an influenza pandemic with the incoming Trump administration.

In May, the following year, Trump's biodefense preparedness adviser, Luciana Borio, warned that a flu pandemic was the country's top health security threat. "We know that it cannot be stopped at the border," she said.

That same month, the top official responsible for leading the

By S.E. CUPP

Tribune News Service

S.E. Cupp is the host of "S.E. Cupp
Unfiltered" on CNN.



U.S. response to a pandemic like COVID-19 left the administration and the health security team he ran was disbanded by national security adviser John Bolton. At the time, a former Obama administration official warned the move "seems to actively unlearn the lessons we learned through very hard experience over the last 15 years. These moves make us materially less safe. It's inexplicable."

And just last year, from January to August, the Department of Health and Human Services simulated a pandemic scenario, code-named "Crimson Contagion," which revealed how incredibly underfunded and underprepared the federal government was for a viral outbreak like this very one.

What good are all these simulations if they do not spur the government into action?

With all of these failings coming to light—and surely there are more to come—Trump has tried to dodge accountability at every turn. First he said, "I don't take responsibility at all" for testing lags. He's blamed Obama, Democrats, even journalists for his administration's failures, at one time saying "the only thing we weren't prepared for was the media."

He's said he didn't know anything about dismantling the pandemic response team, despite a video of him explaining that decision shows that to be a lie. "I'm a businessperson," he said during a press briefing in February. "I don't like having thousands of people around when you don't need them."

He's alternately dismissed the pandemic as nothing more than the flu, and now he is saying coronavirus is far worse than the flu.

There's simply no way around it. This administration's lack of preparedness and, in some cases, willful denial of facts has cost American lives. And while we're still coping with the current pandemic, it's not too early to think about the next one and ask ourselves: Is this president capable of learning from mistakes when he refuses to admit he's made any? The answer is both obvious and terrifying.

EDITORIAL POLICY

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Deadly flu spreading

The medical community works the clock to find medication to eradicate the fatal pandemic coronavirus exploding across the country. It's a new viral infection that has killed more people than the 9/11 plane crashes.

Most folks who listened to information on the lethal virus are troubled by it all. There's bifurcation of information about what the beast is all about. Confusing. Why promote confusion on an issue that kills? There's failure conveying the right information.

Pelosi's agenda is contrary to helping American families' need to put food on the dinner table! This misguided view must be stopped! It's people's lives, Ms. Pelosi! It's food, first family home, automobile, and health care, among others.

We try to stay calm hoping the virus fades into history or a vaccine is in the works in medical labs to extinct it altogether. For now, there's no medication.

Individually, we're troubled by the threat of the virus on family health. We're hit with a myriad of questions while listening to medical explanations for some sense of security. There's only suspect hope while the explanation meanders inconclusive at best, useless at worst.

For now, it's all a matter of taking care of basics and it begins

with you: stay clean and avoid socializing until this pandemic subsides. You're the captain of your canoe. Navigate it to safe port. Stay home and avoid socializing!

Death in NY is such that it now uses refrigerated trucks as morgues. It's a highly infectious virus that kills over 500 people daily.

Imposition

The deadly pandemic has stretched the ability of most health care systems overwhelmed by sick people amidst limited space and budget. It's happening worldwide. Leaves the sick at the mercy of what the system provides.

It's a hard virus where water fills the bronchioles in the lungs, denying air passage that leads to death. Imagine the life and death struggle to breath when your lungs are compromised and dysfunctional.

It has shut down thousands upon thousands of small businesses and left some 3.3 million people jobless across the country. We've seen calamities in our lifetime, coming out of it beaten but resilient every inch of the way. We shall rebound once more.

Medication known as hydroxychloroquine and the antibiotic azithromycin are found to offer promise of healing the viral infection. However, some doctors refuse its use in that it lowers white blood cells needed for healing.

Unfortunately, there's no medication to contain or eradicate the infection today. The only practical answer is to "stay home" to allow the virus to die naturally, per a medical report. We're emotionally challenged but stay put for we will beat the invisible enemy hopefully soon.

President Trump has marshalled everything he has to contain the spread of the lethal virus. He's demonstrated what leadership entails working the clock to protect all Americans!

Historic

Efforts included deploying two military ships (basically complete hospitals with a thousand beds each) to help besieged health facilities in NY and LA. It's one historic mobilization of medical supplies and health experts to help where needed most.

The viral infection has upended daily life, surging in ways that prompts collective efforts to help those infected. Guam has 55

By JOHN S. DELROSARIO JR.
Special to the Saipan Tribune



John DelRosario Jr. is a former publisher of the Saipan Tribune and a former secretary of the Department of Public Lands. All views expressed by the author are his/her own and do not necessarily reflect the opinion and stance of the Saipan Tribune.

cases as of this writing while we have six.

Reportedly, the elderly is the most vulnerable especially those with pre-existing conditions. Take care of their needs to avoid infection at all cost.

Notice how this microscopic virus has brought the entire global community to its knees? Stay clean and keep your distance from all. It's one way to keep the beast from spreading.

Meanwhile, the U.S. Congress has approved a \$2.3 trillion appropriation to help the working-class deal with the hardship imposed by the economic decrease. At least an opportunity is availed for folks who've lost jobs and small businesses shuttered by the crisis. A second chance should grant them the opportunity to rebuild moving forward.

The unusual and fatal virus spreads so quickly. It required reassignment of doctors, medical staff and nurses to other state hospitals with staff shortage to stamp out the pandemic.

Gratitude

New York is known as the "city that never sleeps." That has changed to the "city that never breaths" where folks wear face masks all day long. Yep! COVID-19 has basically changed a way of life. City streets once swarmed by large crowds have become ghost towns.

Today, NY and healthcare facilities in NJ are strained where they must deal with a large number of sick folks. In some hospitals, staff have to endure working sick just to be able to help patients. Grand dedication!

Preparing for the worst

By TIM CORDON
Tribune News Service



Tim Cordon is a peace and justice activist in Madison, Wis. This column was produced for the Progressive Media Project, which is operated by The Progressive magazine, and distributed by Tribune News Service.

We need to prepare for the possibility, perhaps even the likelihood, that our health care system is on the threshold of becoming overwhelmed, to the point of collapse. What is needed is a rapid response with sweeping measures.

As a former nurse who has been pondering the coronavirus response, I have a few suggestions for action on the local, state and federal levels:

Test all workers whose jobs are now considered essential, including health care workers, bus drivers and food workers, for COVID-19 as soon as possible, using the most accurate methods available.

Recruit citizens to work as backup emergency workers. Test these workers and admit them to training and living centers (vacant schools, dorms, hotels) using strict protocols. Those who test positive should be quarantined in separate buildings where others, including coronavirus-infected people, can care for those who are sick.

Everyone needs to learn and engage in the best practices regarding COVID-19 protective measures.

We need a coronavirus call center and daily informational broadcasts to help connect people to important services, information and volunteer opportunities. This needs to happen through media including radio, daily newspapers, TV and all internet-based platforms.

Test all prisoners and prison staff for COVID-19 and release all inmates imprisoned for nonviolent crimes, those who are elderly and pose no significant safety risk and those who have shown substantial evidence of rehabilitation and readiness to return to the community. Those who test positive for COVID-19 should be released to appropriate settings to keep themselves and others safe.

We should postpone all in-person voting activities and give all communities at least several weeks to expand and promote voting by mail. Voting by mail should be the preferred option nationally until this crisis passes.

These are just a few ideas to consider, in pursuit of our main goals: to prevent the spread of this virus and care for all whose lives and health are now in danger.

Letter to parishioners

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ: Greetings of Christ's peace to all of you!

Holy Week is upon us and the Diocese of Chalan Kanoa has issued new guidelines affecting our observance and celebration. The guidelines are consistent with the Vatican Decree issued on March 25, 2020, and the issuances by our civil authorities in response to the coronavirus pandemic. This year's Holy Week, a sacred tradition in our Catholic journey, will be different since we continue remote attendance by parishioners, online liturgy, spiritual communion for all liturgical celebrations.

For many of our parishioners, this is the first time that we won't be in our physical parish churches for the Sacred Triduum. We do miss you. Priest presiders feel somewhat different celebrating Mass without your physical presence, our dear parishioners. I ask for your understanding as we continue to do this for our safety and wellbeing.

With the warnings for the pandemic, our response and resilience as a community are once again put to the test. Just as our recovery from one of the most forceful super typhoons started to settle in, the novel coronavirus, or COVID-19, was announced as a threat to life and liberty—bringing it to the focus of every home and family. Its spread has imposed unyielding and rapidly changing conditions to every local, national, and global community. Daily life as we know it has shifted to new routines—social distancing, restricted movement and gatherings, unprecedented planning and procedures, and accelerated use of digital devices. All of these changes are important, precautionary, intended to preserve health, and through fervent prayer and united effort, life-saving.

Let us do our part. Let us unite to heed the guidance from

By RYAN P. JIMENEZ
Special to the Saipan Tribune



Most Rev. Ryan P. Jimenez, D.D. is the bishop of the Diocese of Chalan Kanoa.






our leaders and health care providers. With foremost effort and hope, we focus on Him who saves: Jesus. Let Him nurture our resilience and guide us to do what is right, in a spirit of prayerful reflection during this Holy Week. Archbishop Arthur Roche, the Secretary of the Congregation for Divine Worship, highlighted that during the pandemic "we must try to stop the contagion without stopping our prayer." St. Paul, in his Letter to the Thesalonians, has this to add "pray without ceasing" (1 Thes. 5:17).

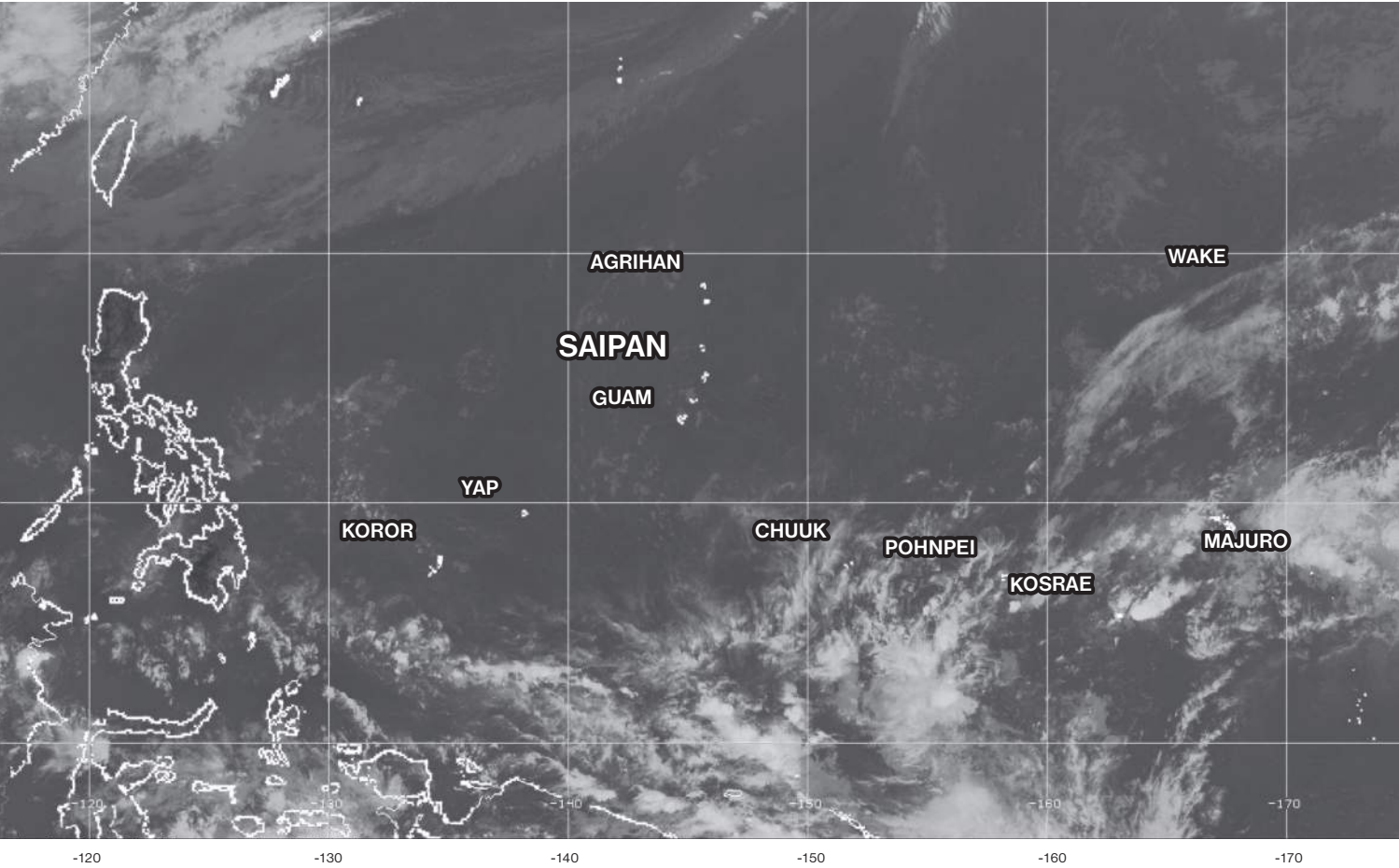
We thank all our dedicated health care workers, government leaders, first responders, volunteers, families as they regroup and take care of one another. We thank all our teachers for doing creative ways to be connected with their students online so that learning continues. We thank parents, first teachers in our families. May the Lord, the source of strength, guide them and keep them safe.

I also thank my fellow pastors in other faith denominations. We are one in prayer. And, in a special way, I thank my brother priests and deacons, religious sisters, staff, and volunteers for living out what it means to be members of the "one body of Christ."

Thank you. God bless you. And have a blessed Holy Week.

The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN									
TODAY		SATURDAY		SUNDAY		MONDAY		TUESDAY	
									
Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 10 to 20 mph.		Partly cloudy with isolated showers. Northeast winds 15 to 20 mph.		Mostly cloudy with isolated showers.		Partly cloudy with isolated light showers.		Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	
87°	76°	88°	76°	88°	76°	88°	76°	88°	76°
YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE									



PICTURE TIME: 9:10 AM, THURSDAY, APRIL 2, 2020
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

The Marianas remain in a dry season trade-wind pattern, however there are a couple of disturbances upstream, minor ripples in the flow. This will be just enough to shake some showers out and keep us from completely drying out. Overall though, we most likely will still fall short of the 1 inch per week that would fulfill our water needs. Since Guam is a high island made of limestone, it has a bit of an aquifer. Therefore, most of the effects of drought are just short term. In a few months, everything should be greening up nicely again.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

MICRONESIA			▲ ▼ °F
Guam and Rota	Mostly Sunny	86° / 77°	
Palau	Showers	86° / 78°	
Yap	Mostly Sunny	87° / 79°	
Chuuk	Partly Cloudy	87° / 80°	
Pohnpei	Thunderstorms	85° / 79°	
Kosrae	Thunderstorms	85° / 79°	
Majuro	Thunderstorms	84° / 80°	

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	6:11 AM	6:29 PM
Saturday	6:10 AM	6:29 PM
Sunday	6:09 AM	6:29 PM
Monday	6:08 AM	6:30 PM
Tuesday	6:08 AM	6:30 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	-	2:01 AM	1:38 PM
Saturday	-	2:54 AM	2:39 AM
Sunday	-	3:46 AM	3:41 PM
Monday	-	4:35 AM	4:42 PM
Tuesday	-	5:23 AM	5:43 PM

AROUND THE GLOBE			▲ ▼ °F
Auckland	Mostly Sunny	70° / 57°	
Beijing	Sunny	66° / 37°	
Hong Kong	Mostly Cloudy	75° / 66°	
Honolulu	Showers	81° / 70°	
London	Showers	61° / 45°	
Los Angeles	Sunny	71° / 53°	
Manila	Sunny	97° / 75°	
Melbourne	Rain	61° / 48°	
Miami	Mostly Sunny	79° / 70°	
New York	Showers	53° / 47°	
Osaka	Mostly Sunny	64° / 43°	
Paris	Mostly Cloudy	57° / 39°	
Busan	Sunny	66° / 39°	
Rome	Mostly Sunny	63° / 39°	
Salem	Mostly Sunny	79° / 51°	
San Francisco	Mostly Sunny	59° / 48°	
Seoul	Sunny	61° / 39°	
Tokyo	Mostly Sunny	68° / 46°	
Washington, DC	Partly Cloudy	61° / 46°	

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY			FEET
4:40 AM	HIGH TIDE	1.72	
9:59 AM	LOW TIDE	1.24	
2:25 PM	HIGH TIDE	1.59	
9:59 PM	LOW TIDE	-0.04	

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**NMI CRIME STOPPERS**

Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:

- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any IT&E cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.net

GUIDANCE FOR THE MARIANAS



Stay at home, slow the spread

■ **Please stay home** and avoid unnecessary travel as much as possible.

■ **If you feel sick or if someone in your home is sick**, stay home. Do not go to work. Avoid social gatherings. Contact your personal doctor or call the **COVID-19 Info Line** at 285-1542, 285-1672, 285-1352, or 285-1854.

■ **If you are an older person (*man'amko*)**, you are more vulnerable to becoming severely ill with the virus. Stay home and away from other people as much as possible.

■ **If you are a person with a preexisting illness (such as asthma, diabetes, and heart disease)**, you are more vulnerable to becoming severely ill with the virus. Stay home and away from other people as much as possible.

■ **Work or do schoolwork from home** whenever possible and reasonable.

■ **Avoid social gatherings** in groups of more than 10.

■ **Avoid eating out** at restaurants, use **drive-thru, take-out, or delivery options**.

■ **Continue practicing good hygiene:**

- Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve (not your hands) when coughing or sneezing.
- Avoid touching your face.
- Disinfect frequently used items (cellphones, computers, household items) as much as possible.

Source: Office of the Governor

Business

UN: Pandemic could shrink global economy almost 1% in 2020

UNITED NATIONS (AP)—The global economy could shrink almost 1% this year due to the new coronavirus, a sharp reversal from the pre-pandemic forecast of 2.5% growth, the United Nations said Wednesday.

The U.N. Department of Economic and Social Affairs warned in a report that the decline could be even deeper if restrictions on economic activities extend into the third quarter of the year and if fiscal stimulus efforts don't support income and consumer spending.

By comparison, it said, the world economy contracted 1.7% during the global financial crisis in 2009.

"Fears of the exponential spread of the virus—and growing uncertainties about

the efficacy of various containment measures—have rocked financial markets worldwide," the report noted, "with market volatility surpassing its peak during the global financial crisis and equity markets and oil prices plunging to multi-year lows."

In the best-case scenario, the report said, moderate declines in private consumption, investment and exports will be offset by increases in government spending in the seven major industrialized nations and China, leading to global growth of 1.2% in 2020.

In the worst-case scenario, it said, global output would contract 0.9%, "based on demand-side shocks of different magnitudes" to China, Japan, South Korea, the United States and the European Union



This photo provided by the New York Stock Exchange shows the unoccupied NYSE trading floor, closed temporarily for the first time in 228 years as a result of coronavirus concerns, Tuesday March 24, 2020.

which will see lower trade and investment.

The severity of the economic impact—"whether a moderate or deep recession"—will largely depend on the duration of restrictions on the movement of people and economic activities in major economies and on the size and impact of fiscal responses, it said.

"Urgent and bold policy measures are needed, not only to contain the pandemic and save lives, but also to protect the most vulnerable in our societies from economic ruin and to sustain economic growth and financial stability," said Liu Zhenmin, the U.N. under-secretary-general for economic and social affairs.

The report said fiscal stimulus packages should prioritize health spending to contain the spread of the virus and should

provide income support to households most affected by the pandemic.

But the outlook remains gloomy.

"A sharp decline in consumer spending in the European Union and the United States will reduce imports of consumer goods from developing countries," the report said. "In addition, global manufacturing production could contract significantly, amid the possibility of extended disruptions to global supply chains."

It noted that several automobile companies have announced large-scale production suspensions in Europe and the United States and many firms worldwide especially in the auto, consumer electronics and telecommunications industries "are facing shortages of intermediate components as exports from China contracted at an annual pace of 17.2 per cent in the first two months of the year."

"More severe and protracted production disruptions would affect a large number of developing economies that are deeply integrated in global supply networks," it warned.

InteliSecure pushes forward with hiring

The CNMI's first cyber security company is scheduled to launch immediately after Gov. Ralph DLG Torres lifts the CNMI's social-distancing orders. InteliSecure, Inc. in partnership with Latte Training Academy, Inc., began interviews via web conferencing last Monday for 12 positions they are seeking to fill.

"Each of the candidates referred for interviews completed LTA's CompTIA Information Technology Fundamentals course prior to the COVID-19 crisis. While many of the students were scheduled to sit for the examination at the NMC Testing center, the COVID-19 crisis has required us to reschedule the examinations. Despite that, we felt comfortable referring the participants to InteliSecure for employment interviews," said LTA board member Ed Arriola Jr.

LTA ran its first cohort for the CompTIA Information Technology Fundamentals in January 2020 in support of their partnership with InteliSecure. The organization was scheduled to launch its second cohort in March. The CNMI's social distancing orders has required LTA to pivot its instruction from their facility at the Marianas Business Plaza to an online format.

"We are exploring a couple of online platforms including

Adobe Connect Learning, Big Blue Button, and Jisti. While we can use Google Hang-Outs and Zoom, we are concerned about bandwidth since those platforms are being used heavily for distance learning and telehealth needs" said IT instructor Herm Kintol.

For their part, InteliSecure has completed renovations of its office at the Marianas Business Plaza and has ordered the tech and furnishings that are being shipped from California to the CNMI. CNMI site director Jose Padilla relocated from InteliSecure's Denver offices to the CNMI to begin the hiring, training and launching of the site.

"I am thrilled to be leading the charge on this very important initiative for InteliSecure. Obviously, the timing of the COVID-19 crisis is less than ideal, but I am grateful for the support that the Latte Training Academy team has provided in this move. I was able to interview candidates earlier this week via web conferencing and was very happy with the results. We look forward to the next group of candidates that LTA will be training up and once the Office of the Governor provides the guidance, we will ensure that we move as quickly as possible to contributing to getting the CNMI back to normalcy," said Padilla.

LTA, which is a 501c3 non-

as well as a 50% decline in oil prices.

This scenario "assumes that wide-ranging restrictions on economic activities in the EU and the United States would extend until the middle of the second quarter," the report said.

It said increasing restric-

profit, has historically ensured that participants do not pay for services it provides. The organization has covered the cost of instruction, materials, and certifications through the use of external resources including federal grants, workforce funding, local grants, and operational revenues to support its mission.

"While LTA covered the expense of the first cohort of students to support this effort, we have been in discussion with the CNMI Department of Labor to ensure that residents can avail of the federal workforce funding to support these efforts moving forward. We want to ensure that participants can focus on learning the skills necessary to deploy into the workforce and make sure that we leverage funding specifically designated for these types of efforts to meet that commitment. We have been in discussion with the CNMI's State Workforce Development Board and are confident that they will act swiftly to ensure that citizens interested in engaging in this and other workforce training programs are given the financial support to do so," said LTA board president Juan-Carlos Benitez.

To learn more about the Latte Training Academy, Inc.'s programs and services, visit www.lattetrainingacademy.org. (PR)

tions on the movement of people and lock-downs in Europe and North America "are hitting the service sector hard, particularly industries that involve physical interactions such as retail trade, leisure and hospitality, recreation and transportation services." Those sectors account for more than a quarter of all jobs in those countries, and as these businesses lose revenue, unemployment is likely to increase sharply, it said.

The report said the negative effects of current economic restrictions in richer developed nations will soon spill over into developing countries,

Some employers to laid-off staffers: Let's stay in touch

As millions of job cuts tear through the U.S. economy, a faint glimmer of light has emerged: Some employers are trying to maintain ties to the staffers they're letting go so they can more quickly rehire them once the viral outbreak has passed.

Several large retail chains are furloughing workers—a form of temporary job cut that often maintains health insurance—rather than laying them off. And many small businesses, too, are keeping in touch with workers they've had to let go.

"Anyone who's trying to lay off workers is already thinking about how they can bring them back," said Jania Bailey, CEO of FranNet, a consultancy that works with franchise companies.

One of them is Tracy True, who said she's keeping in touch at least once a week with the 10 furloughed staffers of her clothing store in Vestavia, Alabama.

"As soon as we're given the all clear," True says, "we'll be back."

How long millions of other laid-off employees will remain without work will help determine the depth and duration of a U.S. recession that's almost surely begun and is destined to worsen in coming months.

Workers on temporary lay-off typically spend less time unemployed compared with those who permanently lose work and must transition to new industries and acquire new skills. For the economy to recover relatively fast, many workers would need to return quickly to their former jobs.

In Europe, some countries are directing a portion of their aid to help companies avoid layoffs by putting staffers on either reduced hours or paid leave. Governments will typically pay a chunk of the salaries of employees while they're not working.

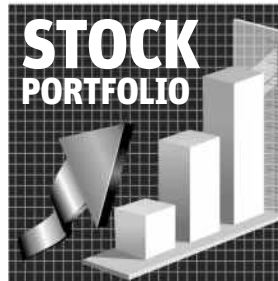
Germany fared particularly well with a short-work program during the 2009 recession. It supported 1.5 million workers, thereby limiting unemployment. This year, German officials say they

expect 2.35 million workers to benefit.

In the United States, some economists are more pessimistic. They fear that even companies that intend to rehire workers will struggle to do so if the coronavirus outbreak lasts into late summer or fall. And even when shutdown orders are lifted, consumer spending may be slow to recover as people remain wary of congregating in groups.

"There is a strong possibility that the crisis goes on long enough that employer-employee relationships will begin to fray," said Martha Gimbel, an economist at Schmidt Futures, a philanthropic organization.

On Monday, former Federal Reserve Chair Janet Yellen suggested that the U.S. economy could experience a "V-shaped" recovery, in which a deep recession is followed by a strong rebound. Yet she cautioned that "if firms sever their connections to their workers," a quick recovery would be unlikely.



LEADING INDICATORS

S&P
2,487.75
+39.75
+1.62%

DOW
21,086.00
+346.00
+1.67%

NASDAQ
7,548.75
+110.00
+1.48%

In U.S. dollar terms

EXCHANGE RATES

Australian Dollar	1.41
British Pound	0.81
Canadian Dollar	1.41
Chinese Yuan	6.98
Euro	0.91

Hong Kong Dollar	7.75
Indian Rupee	75.57
Japanese Yen	107.28
Malaysian Ringgit	4.31
New Zealand Dollar	1.68
Philippine Peso	49.77

Russian Ruble	77.74
Singapore Dollar	1.43
South Korean Won	1,203.90
Swiss Franc	0.97
Taiwan Dollar	29.49
Thailand Baht	33.03

Nation

NY state's virus deaths jump to more than 1,900

NEW YORK (AP)—Coronavirus deaths soared. New York City playgrounds were targeted for shutdown to help slow an outbreak projected to grow worse for another month. Overtaxed hospitals began transferring patients north of the city. And residents near one struggling hospital have become all too used to ambulance sirens.

"It's very eerie. I think everyone's just doing what they can, but at the same time it bothers you. Especially if you're around Elmhurst because you can hear all the ambulances," said Emma Sorza, near Elmhurst Hospital in Queens.

The latest coronavirus developments in New York:

NUMBERS UP, NO RESPITE

New York's COVID-19 death count more than doubled in 72 hours to 1,941.

One month after New York discovered its first infection—a health care worker returning from Iran—the state tallied more than 83,000 positive cases. The 1,941 deaths were up from 965 Sunday morning. New York logged its first virus-related death March 13, an 82-year-old woman with emphysema.

With more than 12,000 peo-



AP
The Empire State building is lit in red and white lights to honor emergency medical workers Tuesday, March 31, 2020, in New York

ple hospitalized, New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo said the latest outbreak projections show no respite this month.

"What we're looking at now is the apex—the top of the curve—roughly at the end of April, which means another month of this," Cuomo told a state Capitol news briefing.

One model cited by Cuomo

projected 16,000 deaths in New York once the outbreak runs its course in the coming months. Though the governor stressed it's unclear how the pandemic will end.

"Nobody knows what's going to happen. And I understand the need for closure, the need for control," he said. "We're at a place we've never

been before."

CLOSING PLAYGROUNDS

Upset that people were still packing into New York City playgrounds despite social-distancing rules, Cuomo said he is working with city officials to have them closed. Green spaces would be kept open.

"So use the open space in a park. Walk around, get some sun, great," Cuomo said. "No density. No basketball games. No close contact. No violation of social distancing, period."

City police have been patrolling the city's parks, playgrounds and other public spaces, cautioning people to stay six feet apart and breaking up groups violating the rules. Police have even sent marked patrol cars through big city parks blaring recorded re-

mindings about the importance of social distancing.

Mayor Bill de Blasio has said the rules were being followed at most playgrounds, but had closed a handful where violations were rampant. The mayor said Wednesday he respects that Cuomo is approaching the issue with "an abundance of caution" and will work with him.

HOSPITALS UNDER PRESSURE

A medical advisory council is telling paramedics in New York City they shouldn't take fatal heart victims to hospitals to have them pronounced dead.

The temporary protocol issued this week by the Regional Emergency Medical Service is meant to ease the

burden on city hospitals, some of which have begun transferring patients more than 100 miles (160 kilometers) north to the Albany area.

Albany Med said it accepted 14 transfer patients late Tuesday who have either confirmed or suspected cases of COVID-19. The hospital said it accepted patients from hospitals in Jamaica and Flushing in Queens.

Data released by the city shows that the disease is having a disproportionate effect in certain neighborhoods, mainly in Brooklyn and Queens.

"I'm terrified to go outside and also to walk along this strip, because everyone that's headed to the hospital, which we can see from here, is going through here," said Nicholas Corsini, near Elmhurst Hospital.

An emergency field hospital with 68 beds opened Wednesday in Central Park near The Mount Sinai Hospital. A temporary hospital in the Jacob K. Javits Convention Center and a Navy hospital ship docked off Manhattan were also taking patients.

De Blasio said the city is engaged in the "epic process" of increasing hospital capacity from 20,000 beds to 65,000 beds by the end of April. He said the city needs over 5 million masks, 100,000 gowns and 400 more ventilators by Sunday just to be prepared for next week. He said the city will need up to 3,000 more ventilators during the next week.

Call for virus volunteers yields army of health care workers

NEW YORK (AP)—The work is exhausting and dangerous, the situation bleak. But an army of health care workers heeded New York's call for help reinforcing hospitals overwhelmed by the coronavirus pandemic.

So far, at least 82,000 people have volunteered for the state's reserve force of medical workers—a group that includes recent retirees returning to work, health care professionals who can take a break from their regular jobs and people between gigs, according to health officials.

Few have made it into the field yet as hospitals and state regulators vet enlistees and decide how to deploy them. But Gov. Andrew Cuomo said Tuesday that's about to change. By Thursday, hospitals expect to hire about 1,500 volunteers to rescue a medical workforce that needs relief, particularly in New York City.

Health care workers who have hit the ground already, many brought in by staffing agencies, discovered a hospital system in danger of being overwhelmed.

"I have never seen so many human beings in an ER at one

time in my entire life," said Liz Schaffer, a nurse from St. Paul, Minnesota, who had her first shift Tuesday at Mount Sinai Hospital in Manhattan. "Shoulder to shoulder. It is a sight I never thought I would see. Patients are dying every day. Every single day."

Similar recruiting efforts are underway in other states preparing for waves of patients, including California, Washington, Pennsylvania, Illinois, Louisiana, Massachusetts, Oregon, Virginia, New Jersey, North Dakota and Washington D.C. And recruitment is happening at the federal level too, where the Army and the Department of Veterans Affairs have reached out.

The death toll from the virus climbed to nearly 2,000 Wednesday across New York state, with most of the fatalities coming in New York City in just the past week.

Several of the dead have been health care workers, including Kious Kelly, an assistant nurse manager in the emergency room at Mount Sinai West Hospital, who died March 24 after becoming infected with the virus.

Many other medical work-

ers have become seriously ill. Protective masks, gowns and gloves remain rationed at some hospitals due to anticipated shortages.

Despite those risks, many have volunteered to join the fight.

"Whatever it is that they need, I'm willing to do," said Jerry Kops, a licensed nurse on Long Island who was on tour as a musician in the Blue Man Group before its North American tour was interrupted by the coronavirus shutdown a few weeks ago.

"I keep thinking about my old co-workers and friends that are still in nursing. And to me, it's like if they have to be there, I should be there too," he said. "If it means being at a testing site, cool. If it means being relief staff for RNs that are overworked right now in hospitals, cool."

Hospital volunteers in New York will be paid. But that is not always the case in other parts of the country that are seeking medical volunteers. In Washington state, for instance, volunteer retirees who staff free clinics are not routinely paid for their work. But those who volunteer at hospitals will be paid.

British man charged with smuggling phony coronavirus cure

LOS ANGELES (AP)—A British man accused of smuggling a phony coronavirus cure into the United States was charged Wednesday with a federal crime, prosecutors said.

Frank Richard Ludlow, 59, of West Sussex was charged in Los Angeles federal court with introducing misbranded drugs into interstate commerce and could face up to three years in federal prison if convicted, according to the U.S. attorney's office.

He was arrested last week on drug charges in the United Kingdom and remains in custody there, authorities said. It wasn't immediately clear whether he had an attorney.

Prosecutors alleged that Ludlow, who isn't a doctor, had

been selling people in California and Utah via mail a concoction called "Trinity Remedy" that he touted as a "miracle cure" for various ailments, according to a court affidavit.

"This cure" — later rebranded as "Trinity Mind, Body & Soul" — allegedly contained vitamin C, an enzyme mix, potassium thiocyanate, and hydrogen peroxide. Consumers were instructed to add 18 ounces of water, say a prayer, drink half of the solution, take a probiotic along with bee pollen, and then ingest the remainder of the solution," the U.S. attorney's office statement said.

Authorities say Ludlow sold between 300 and 400 of the treatment kits but in Feb-

ruary or March of this year, as the coronavirus pandemic worsened, he began selling the kits under a new name: "Trinity COVID-19 SARS Antipathogenic Treatment."

The treatments haven't been approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration for any medical use.

"Every major health authority has warned that there is no specific antiviral treatment for COVID-19 and no vaccine to prevent coronavirus infection," according to the U.S. attorney's office.

"Hucksters who hawk 'treatments' for this deadly disease put consumers' lives at risk by peddling unapproved drugs," U.S. Attorney Nick Hanna said.

Asia

Virus data: What's known, not known about China's numbers



AP

Workers wearing face masks and carrying disinfectant sprayers walk along a street in Beijing, Wednesday, April 1, 2020.

BEIJING (AP)—Every few days brings another grim milestone in the coronavirus outbreak. First Italy and Spain surpassed China in reported deaths. Then, this week, the U.S. and France did.

But did they really?

Skepticism about China's numbers has swirled throughout the crisis, fueled by official efforts to quash bad news in the early days and a general distrust of the government. Long lines of people waiting to collect the ashes of loved ones at funeral homes last week revived the debate.

There is no smoking gun pointing to a cover-up by China's ruling Communist Party. But intentional or not, there is reason to believe that more people died of COVID-19 than the official tally, which stood at 3,312 at the end of Tuesday. The same applies to the 81,554 confirmed cases, now exceeded by the U.S., Italy and Spain.

The health system in Wuhan, the city where three-fourths of China's victims died, was overwhelmed at the peak of the outbreak. Hospitals overflowed, patients with symptoms were sent home and there weren't enough kits to test everyone. In any country, getting a complete picture in the fog of war is virtually impossible.

"The number of confirmed cases of COVID-19 by country appears like a grim league table and draws the attention of many," said Hsu Li Yang, who heads the infectious diseases program at the National University of Singapore. "However, it is important to understand that these numbers — be it from China, Italy,

Singapore or the U.S.A. — are all inaccurate, and they are all underestimates to varying degrees of the actual number of infections."

DEATHS: THE FUNERAL URNS

China scrambled hard in late January to handle the spiraling number of infected people and test them. On some days, it reported more new suspected cases—those who had symptoms but had not yet been tested—than confirmed ones.

Those who died before they were tested never made it into the official death tally. Just how many is unclear. An unidentified doctor told Caixin, a Chinese magazine, that the death toll for suspected cases at the doctor's hospital was almost as high as for confirmed ones over a 20-day period.

Others died at home before they were tested, since hospitals didn't have enough beds to admit them.

At the time, some people in China asked on social media whether the reported death toll was inaccurate for those reasons. The posts have been deleted, probably victims of censorship.

A few posts raised the question again last week after online images showed people in Wuhan lining up for hours to collect the ashes of relatives and anecdotal media reports that thousands of urns were being delivered to funeral homes. As of the end of Tuesday, the city's coronavirus death toll was 2,553.

The city, which is gradually easing virus-control restrictions that have kept residents from moving around for two months, began allowing ashes

to be collected in time for an upcoming holiday when people tend to relatives' graves.

One social media post asked the government to publish how many people die on average in the city and how many have died this year to give a better reckoning of victims.

Even without the virus, several thousand die every month in the city of 11 million people. From January to March last year, 14,700 bodies were cremated in Wuhan, according to quarterly data posted online.

The city also diverted most of its medical resources to fighting the virus, leaving some other sick people without care. Early in the crisis, one woman told The Associated Press a relative died after a long wait for an ambulance. She couldn't say for sure that caused his death, but more people may have died than usual from other causes because they couldn't get treated.

Exactly how many died from the coronavirus may never be known.

INFECTIONS: WHEN ZERO IS NOT ZERO

For the last two weeks, Wuhan has reported no new cases almost every day. It's a remarkable decline from the thousands it reported every day until mid-February, and the hundreds into early March.

But China decided early to stop including in its count those who test positive for the virus but don't have any symptoms. The World Health Organization asks member countries to report asymptomatic lab-confirmed cases, though most with big outbreaks don't have the testing capacity to identify them.

World

Proposed UN resolution calls COVID-19 a threat to peace

UNITED NATIONS (AP)—Tunisia has proposed a U.N. Security Council resolution that would call the coronavirus pandemic "a threat to humanity and to international peace and security" and call for an immediate global humanitarian cease-fire to respond to "the unprecedented threat posed by COVID-19."

The U.N.'s most powerful body has not addressed the pandemic sweeping the globe, but Dominican Republic Ambassador Jose Singer, the current council president, said Wednesday he expects members to meet on COVID-10 "for sure next week, or before." Secretary-General Antonio Guterres is expected to brief the council at the request of Germany's

U.N. Ambassador Christoph Heusgen, diplomats said.

Singer said negotiations on the resolution were taking place among the 15 council members.

The draft resolution, which diplomats say has support from the 10 non-permanent council members, stresses the importance of "urgent international action to curb the impact of COVID-19." It underscores "that combating this pandemic requires greater international cooperation and solidarity, and a coordinated, comprehensive and global international response under the leadership of the United Nations."

In calling for a global cease-fire, the proposed resolution "demands that all efforts emphasize on fighting the pan-

demie and saving lives."

It would also express the council's "commitment to take special measures to provide protection for the most vulnerable in conflict zones, especially refugees, displaced populations, women, children and persons with disabilities."

The Security Council has twice previously addressed public health emergencies, first the HIV/AIDS pandemic and second the swiftly spreading Ebola outbreak in West Africa in 2014 which it called a threat to international peace and security.

The U.N. General Assembly is expected to decide by Thursday evening whether to adopt either, both, or neither of two rival resolutions on COVID-19.

WORLD BRIEFS

Puerto Rico acknowledges missteps as coronavirus peak looms

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico (AP)—Puerto Rico's newest health secretary on Wednesday acknowledged a series of mistakes the government has committed as the U.S. territory prepares for a peak in coronavirus cases. Lorenzo González, who is the third health secretary to serve in the span of two weeks, said the missteps include a lack of contact tracing and improper tracking of those who have tested positive. "The process was deficient," he said. "Nobody along those lines of command did what was prudent." González also said two hospitals, including one previously designated to receive coronavirus patients, will be investigated and fined for recently refusing to accept a patient presenting symptoms consistent with COVID-19. Puerto Rico has reported 11 deaths and more than 280 confirmed cases. González warned the U.S. territory is still awaiting items including ventilators and protective equipment, noting that it's competing with the U.S. mainland: "There is no guarantee any of that equipment will arrive." The lack of protective equipment has become a significant concern for law enforcement officials across the island.

Israel's health minister has virus, top officials to isolate

JERUSALEM (AP)—Israel's health minister, who has had frequent contact with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and other top officials, has the new coronavirus, the Health Ministry announced Thursday. Yaakov Litzman and his wife, who also has contracted the virus, are in isolation, feel well and are being treated, the statement said. Requests to enter isolation will be sent to those who came in contact with the minister in the past two weeks, the announcement said. The Israeli daily Haaretz reported that the head of Israel's Mossad spy agency and the National Security Council were asked to go into isolation because of their contacts with Litzman. Netanyahu had gone into isolation previously after a top aide tested positive for the virus,

but Netanyahu has so far tested negative.

500-plus Quebec seniors' homes have at least one virus case

MONTREAL (AP)—Nearly a quarter of Quebec's seniors residences have at least one case of COVID-19, Quebec Premier Francois Legault said Wednesday. Legault said 519 of the province's roughly 2,200 seniors homes and long-term care facilities have reported cases, and he urged Quebecers to refrain from visiting elderly people who are highly susceptible to the virus. "There must be no visits in residences. It's a matter of life and death," he said. The Quebec government has already pledged \$133 million Canadian (US\$94 million) in emergency assistance for seniors residences to help them hire new staff and adapt to the crisis. On Wednesday, Legault said the government would also offer to pay for hotels for workers who want to limit their contacts outside of work. The number of cases in the province rose by 449 on Wednesday, to a total of 4,611. Two more people died, bringing that total to 33. Canada has more than 9,711 confirmed cases including 111 deaths.

Migrant dies in Mexico detention center riot over virus fear

MEXICO CITY (AP)—A Guatemalan migrant died during a riot at an immigration detention center in Mexico, where detainees burned mattresses to protest conditions they say could expose them to the new coronavirus, officials said Wednesday. Twenty-seven migrants escaped from the facility in the Gulf coast state of Tabasco during the disturbance, Mexico's National Immigration Institute said Wednesday. The institute said the disturbance largely involved Honduran men, but that one Guatemalan man, 42, died of smoke inhalation. According to a local migrant shelter in the Tabasco city of Tenosique, the riot broke out Tuesday because migrants were tired of long periods of detention and also feared that overcrowding and poor sanitary conditions could expose them to the coronavirus. The "72" migrant shelter said 14 other migrants were injured, some seriously.

In Celebration of his new Life

Egredino Mendiola Jones

Lovingly known as "Dino"

Born on October 27, 1947

Died on March 31, 2020

He now joins his loving family:

Father: †David San Nicolas Jones

Mother: †Rosa Mendiola Jones

Brothers-in-Law: †Juan T. Torres
†Max Attao

His peaceful spirit and loving memory will live forever in the hearts of his loving:

Wife: Letty A. Jones
Former Wife: Juana Remeliik

Children: Lorraine and Jeff Roache
Dino Jr. "DJ" & Erleen Jones
Mia Jones
Dinalet Jones
Aguidave "AJ" & Maria Luwideth Jones

Grandchildren: Tasi Jones Palacios
Isaiah Jones Roache
Dino Mobel Jones "Solang"
Darling Hoku Jones
Mackenzie Jones Castro
Micah Jones Castro
Andrina Jones Lague
Levi Lumauag Jones

Siblings: Bec & Jose Seman
Maria Torres "Mako"
Theresita Attao "Terry" & Edward Manglona
Benjamin "Ben" & Sherlyn Jones
Joe Jones

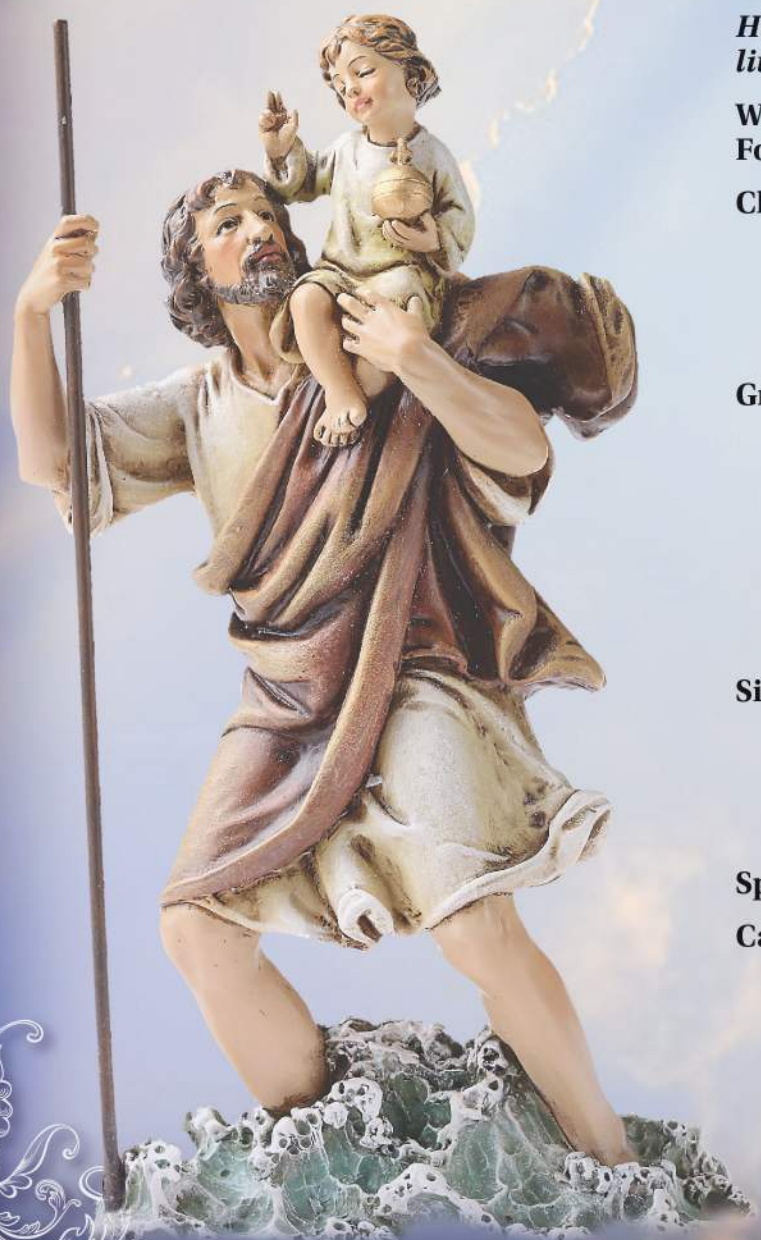
Special Family Member: Christine Tudela

Caregivers: Laura Escabarte
Mark Ausejo
Aileen Polig

Your thoughts and prayers are greatly appreciated.

Thank you, Si Yu'us Ma'ase, Salamat po.

Letty Jones, Children and Family



Life & Style

'Wicked' movie release delayed, 'Minions' pushed to 2021

LOS ANGELES (AP)—2336"Wicked" fans are going to have to wait even longer to see Stephen Daldry's film adaptation of the popular Broadway musical. Universal Pictures on Wednesday announced that another handful of theatrical release dates are shifting due to the coronavirus pandemic, which has bumped "Wicked" off the calendar entirely for the moment.

The studio said that "Minions: The Rise of Gru," which was unable to be finished for its planned summer 2020 release

because of the outbreak, is being pushed back a year to July 2021. "Sing 2" will now come out on "Wicked's" original date of December 22, 2021.

Hollywood studios have been scrambling to revise business plans amid the pandemic, which has closed theaters nationwide and halted productions indefinitely. The summer movie season has already taken a hit, with the recent postponements of "Wonder Woman 1984," "F9" and "Ghostbusters: Afterlife." And a handful of films have been

taken off the calendar including Lin-Manuel Miranda's "In the Heights," Marvel's "Black Widow" and the Tom Hanks World War II drama "Greyhound."

Universal says that "Wicked" will be restored to the release calendar at a later time.

Dolly donates, reads book to children

Country icon Dolly Parton is making a big donation to help fund coronavirus research, as well as taking time out every week to read children's books

online to kids everywhere.

The "9 to 5" singer, actress and philanthropist tweeted Wednesday that she's donating \$1 million to Vanderbilt University Medical Center in Nashville, Tennessee, for coronavirus research.

Additionally, she's working with her charity, The Imagination Library, to read a children's book on YouTube every Thursday at 7 p.m. Eastern for 10 weeks. The Imagination Library provides free books by mail to children in all 50 states.

Asleep at the Wheel singer tests positive

Ray Benson, lead singer of the influential Grammy-winning country band Asleep at the Wheel, says he has tested positive for the COVID-19 virus, but he is recovering at home.

Benson said in a statement

on Wednesday that he had been feeling fatigued and had headaches, but it took several days before doctors would give him a test for the virus. He said he feels lucky and noted that his symptoms thus far have not included fever or coughing.

Rowling starts Harry Potter At Home for housebound families

NEW YORK (AP)—J.K. Rowling is hoping a dash of Harry Potter will help families confined to their homes during the coronavirus pandemic.

The author has launched an online initiative, www.harrypotterathome.com, which features quizzes, games and other activities. For the month of April, Rowling also has partnered with the audio publisher-distributor Audible and the library e-book supplier OverDrive for free audio and digital editions of the first Potter book, "Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone." (The U.S. edition is

called "Harry Potter's and the Sorcerer's Stone").

Rowling's British and American print publishers, Bloomsbury and Scholastic, will contribute materials to the Potter web site and to their own web sites.

"The teachers, parents and carers working to keep children's lives as normal and happy as possible while we're all on lockdown deserve a bit of magic," Rowling said in a statement Wednesday. "I hope these initiatives will give children and even adults a happy distraction during their enforced stay-at-home time."

Dolly Parton donates \$1 million to coronavirus research

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (AP)—Country icon Dolly Parton is making a big donation to help fund coronavirus research, as well as taking time out every week to read children's books online to kids everywhere.

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Nashville, Tennessee for coronavirus research.

Additionally, she's working with her charity, The Imagination Library, to read a children's book on YouTube every Thursday at 7 p.m. EST for 10 weeks. The Imagination Library provides children free books by mail every month and the program is available in all 50 states and five countries.

New Zealand embraces teddies to help make lockdown bear-able

WELLINGTON, New Zealand (AP)—Some are perched in trees. Some are hanging upside down. Some are baking scones.

Teddy bears are popping up in the unlikelyst of places as New Zealanders embrace an international movement in which people are placing the stuffed animals in their windows during coronavirus lockdowns to brighten the mood and give children a game to play by spotting the bears in their neighborhoods.

The inspiration comes from the children's book "We're Going on a Bear Hunt," written by Michael Rosen and illustrated by Helen Oxenbury.

New Zealand last week began a four-week lockdown but people are still allowed outside to exercise if they keep a safe distance from each other. In other words, bear-spotting is okay.



In this Monday, March 30, 2020, photo, a teddy bear hangs upside down in a window of a house in Christchurch, New Zealand.

Mother-of-two and part-time school administrator Deb Hoffman started the Facebook page "We're Not Scared - NZ Bear Hunt" and also set up a website where more than 120,000 people have now put pins on an online map to show the location of their bears. "We're not scared" is a repeated line in the book, which

features a family overcoming a number of obstacles in their search for a bear.

Hoffman said she's been taken aback by the huge response. She said some people are creating personalities for their bears by having them do a different activity each day.

Hoffman said one woman wrote that the teddy bears

were the only thing getting her through the isolation, after she had already been housebound for six weeks following surgery before the lockdown began.

"It's a way for people to feel connected, and to contribute," Hoffman said. "It's really important at a time like this."

Hoffman said she's getting some help to enhance her website so that people will soon be able to interact with the bears by giving them an emotion.

Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern has even joined in, saying people should keep an eye on her window because they might spot a bear.

In a grimly ironic twist, the author of the book is hospitalized with symptoms similar to COVID-19.

Rosen's family said Tuesday that the 73-year-old writer was "poorly" but improving, having previously spent a night in intensive care.

Grandfather has trouble connecting with grandsons

DEAR ABBY: My husband has a contentious relationship with our grandchildren. He generally is a fun, happy and interesting person. But by nature he is not "hands on" when it comes to children.

Our son and daughter have great spouses and five young grandsons. He stands around like a warden waiting for something to happen, then just yells at them. It is clear he doesn't enjoy being with them, and their mood changes from happy to surly when he's around. I enjoy doing things with them and taking them to lots of fun places, and I know my husband doesn't like to go anywhere with them.

I have had two major talks trying to encourage him to have a positive, interactive relationship with the boys, to no avail. He reacts as if I'm the only one who sees this. My sister, son and daughter-in-law have talked to me about it, but I haven't told my husband. Should I just drop this issue?

DOING THE WORK OF TWO

DEAR DOING: Your husband may or may not be capable of changing. However, the next time your sister, son and daughter-in-law talk to you about the negative message your husband is sending the grandchildren, please tell them they are talking to the wrong person. They should take this up with "Grandpa Grump," and you should not be forced into the position of being the messenger.

DEAR ABBY: My daughter is 22 weeks pregnant. This will be our first grandchild, and we were excited to be hosting the

baby shower for her. Unfortunately, her in-laws got involved. We were told they were mostly in charge and we should butt out, and my daughter will host her own shower. She sent us a message stating that they don't want the shower to be a "burden or financial strain on us," so we can come only as guests.

We never ever said anything about finances or anything. We were excited about the shower and couldn't wait to start this amazing journey. What do we do? Do we still go as grandparents, as guests or stay away? We are not allowed to help with anything, but we were told to contribute to the food.

STUNNED IN SOUTH AFRICA

DEAR STUNNED: Contribute what food exactly? A box of crackers? A fruit salad? Money? I don't blame you for being upset. It certainly looks like you have been pushed aside.

Did your daughter send you that message or did her mother-in-law? I ask because it is considered a breach of etiquette for an honoree to throw her own shower. Talk to your daughter. However, do not allow this to drive you away. Attend the shower. If you don't attend, it may be the beginning of an estrangement.

DEAR ABBY: Is it OK for me to be carrying my boss's belongings to his car at the end of his workday? Is it acceptable for me to be making his coffee a certain way and picking up his lunch? I was hired as a second administrative assistant, but I feel more like a maid/servant/slave. It's 2020! I don't think

DEAR ABBY

By **ABIGAIL VAN BUREN**
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.



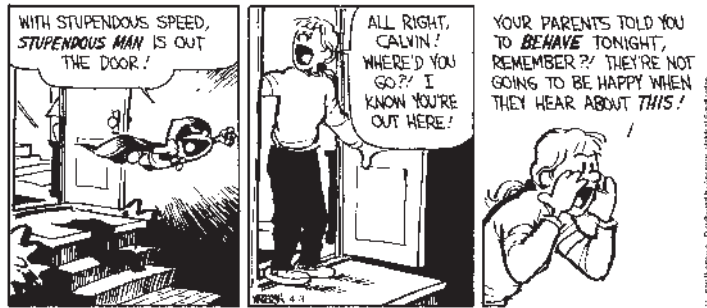
women should be treated like this anymore. Any advice?
UNCERTAIN IN THE EAST

DEAR UNCERTAIN: Absolutely. Have a chat with your employer and review what your duties are supposed to be. Nowhere in your letter is it apparent that your boss is singling you out for these tasks because you're female. If you had proof this was the case, it would be another matter. Because you find these tasks demeaning, consider looking for another job because this may not be the place for you.

For an excellent guide to becoming a better conversationalist and a more sociable person, order "How to Be Popular." Send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for \$8 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Popularity Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes



By Bill Waterson

Garfield®



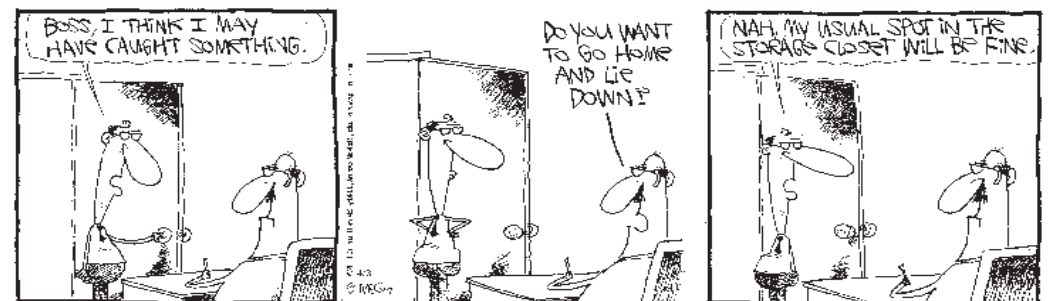
By Jim Davis

Adam@home



By Bryan Basset

The Duplex



By Glenn McCoy

CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 Zing
4 "So there!"
7 Smidgens
12 Glamorous
13 Chowd down
14 Sword fights
15 Berlin's country (Abbr.)
16 Peak featured in "Into Thin Air"
18 Triage ctrs.
19 TV, radio, etc.
20 Color worker
22 Sound from a hot wok
23 Jewels
27 Tel. number add-on
29 Collar
31 Intrepid
34 Piquant
35 Woodland
37 Slugger Williams

DOWN

1 Summoned
2 Without exception
3 Analyze grammatically
4 Soccer star Mia
5 Swear (to)
6 Obeys
7 Notion
8 "— Town"
9 Casual shirt
10 Gore and Green
11 Bygone jet
17 Travel permit
21 Make merry
23 Alumni

24 Still, in verse
25 Flavor enhancer for short
26 Farm pen
28 Ballot markings
30 Hwy.
31 Favorite pal, in a text
32 Caviar
33 "— you serious?"
36 Go sight-seeing
37 Arizona city
40 Public outburst
42 Mystical board
43 "The Tempest" sprite
44 1492 ship
45 Turf-war side
46 "Suffice — say ..."
48 Cudgel
49 Show to a seat, slangily
50 Roman 151
51 Solo of "Star Wars"

Solution time: 25 mins.

Yesterday's answer 4-3

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Cobie Smulders, 38; Adam Scott, 47; Eddie Murphy, 59; Alec Baldwin, 62.

Happy Birthday: Don't sit back. You have a greater edge than you realize. Be persistent, and forge into the future with optimism and the desire to take over. Set your goal, and refuse to let anyone sidetrack you along the way. Turn this year into one of transformation. Embrace positive change, and channel your energy into something that is driven by passion. Your numbers are 4, 12, 23, 27, 32, 35, 46.

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Give your all, and get what you deserve. Courage, dedication and personal gain are heading your way. You will leave a lasting impression if you get involved in games of chance that require intelligence and a competitive drive. ★★★★★

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Show consistency, finish what you start and pay attention to detail. Refuse to let an emotional situation take over or cause you to make a poor decision. A chance meeting with someone who interests you will lead to new options. ★★

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Getting things done on time is crucial. Don't dilly-dally when taking care of your responsibilities is required. How you help others will influence your reputation as well as the favors someone grants you. Step up and make a difference. ★★★★★

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Take advantage of an opportunity. A change that concerns you will turn out better than anticipated. Look for ways to spend less and bring in more money. Getting your finances in order will ease stress. ★★★★★

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Keep an open mind, but don't give in to someone pressuring you to do something that doesn't suit your needs. Emotions will be difficult to control. Rely on common sense, and you will avoid a costly mistake. Make physical fitness a priority. ★★★★★

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Spend wisely, negotiate carefully and choose to work alone. Joint ventures will leave you in a vulnerable position. Make practical changes that will encourage learning whatever you need to know to advance. Listen to your inner voice. ★★★★★

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Keep busy, focus on the present and refuse to get caught in someone's melodrama. A change that offers a better quality of life or that eases stress should be on your to-do list. Strive for equality in meaningful relationships. ★★★★★

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Live up to your potential, not that of someone who is asking or expecting too much for too little. Know your worth, and protect your integrity as well as your reputation. Listen to your intuition, and surround yourself with people you love. ★★

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Expect to face opposition. Don't let frustration take over when you should be concerned with maintaining what you've worked so hard to achieve. Let your actions and accomplishments be your calling card. Stand by your word, and finish what you start. ★★★★★

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): You'll have big plans when it comes to financial matters. Set your sights on what you want to achieve, and make changes that will be conducive to reaching your goal. A stable and innovative partnership will contribute to your success. ★★★★★

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Confusion will set in if you let someone play with your emotions. Refuse to make a change under pressure. If you feel someone is pushing or manipulating you, back away. Protect your health, reputation and financial well-being. ★★★★★

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): A change can be put into play, but first iron out any inconsistency or confusion that prevails. Look at the fine print, pay attention to detail and make decisions based on facts and common sense. Someone from your past will present an opportunity. ★★★★★

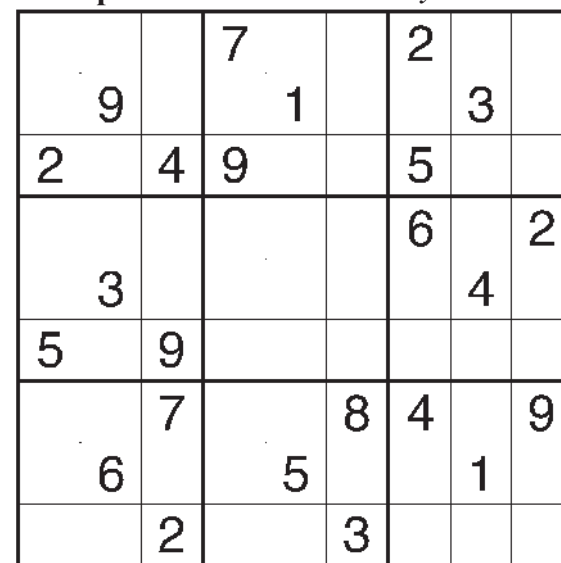
Birthday Baby: You are insightful, determined and commanding. You are inquisitive and regaling.

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SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku

By Dave Green



Difficulty Level ★★★★★

4/03

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Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's Answer

1	8	3	7	4	5	2	9	6
6	9	5	8	1	2	7	3	4
2	7	4	9	3	6	5	8	1
8	4	1	3	9	7	6	5	2
7	3	6	5	2	1	9	4	8
5	2	9	6	8	4	1	7	3
3	5	7	1	6	8	4	2	9
4	6	8	2	5	9	3	1	7
9	1	2	4	7	3	8	6	5

Daily Level ★★★★★

STUMPED?

For answers to today's crossword, call 1-800-226-5955! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

WONDERWORD

By DAVID CUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the WONDERWORD.

PERIODIC TABLE

Solution: 9 letters

R A D O N Y N Y R U C R E M D
O A D B V O T N O T O R P I E
W B D A R E T R E N D S U X L
S E E I E I N S N L Q O E L
D H I H U L D E E I C R D E
E T S G A S L G T L C D G T H
M U Y N H V R Z I A E O Y S
A M R O E T I H M N C V A I B
N S T R T N A O Y A G L O N U
O I S O C L T B R D P O W C S
C B I B O A A T U S R O N O S
I O M G O L D B I L N O L P E
L U E G N I L D O K A I G P V
I N H E L I U M N C D R S E E
S D C A L C I U M E Y E R R N

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4/3

Atomic, Behavior, Bismuth, Boron, Bound, Bridging, Calcium, Chemistry, Cobalt, Copper, Covalent, Display, Gold, Group, Halogens, Heavy, Helium, Hydrogen, Iodine, Iron, Lead, Liquid, Mercury, Meyer, Mixed, Named, Odling, Proton, Radius, Radon, Rows, Seven, Sheet, Silicon, Silver, Solid, Subshell, Tabular, Tin, Trace, Trends, Unknown, Weight, Zinc

Yesterday's Answer: Santa Monica

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Bucks confident to make run for first title



MILWAUKEE (AP)—The NBA-leading Milwaukee Bucks remain confident the coronavirus pandemic won't put a permanent halt to the season and that they'll get to resume chasing their first league title in nearly half a century.

The Bucks had a league-best 53-12 record when play was suspended three weeks ago. With Giannis Antetokounmpo having a potential second straight MVP season, the Bucks seemed poised to make a run at the title that has eluded this franchise since Kareem Abdul-Jabbar led them to an NBA championship in 1971.

Bucks general manager Jon Horst thinks they will get that opportunity.

"We believe that we're going to play," Horst said Wednesday in a conference call. "Everything that we're doing every day in our communications, in our preparations, everything we talk about is being prepared to play at some point, finish out the season and have a resumption."

That's why Milwaukee coach Mike Budenholzer has spent part of this hiatus making sure the Bucks don't lose their edge whenever they do get back on the floor.

He's been studying the Orlando Magic and Brooklyn Nets—the Bucks' two most likely first-round playoff foes—as well as other Eastern Conference teams Milwaukee could see later in the postseason. He's tried to learn from his experiences as a San Antonio Spurs assistant coach during the NBA's most recent work stoppages.

"One of my reference points with the coaching staff has been lockouts," Budenholzer said. "Sometimes when you come out of a lockout, things have been kind of slow, you haven't been able to maybe do your normal routines and preparation, and things happen really

fast. Whether it's three games in three nights, or playoff series are shorter or the time between the end of the regular season to the first playoff game, everything can be shorter or can happen quicker."

His instructions to his players have focused on conditioning while understanding they might not have as much time to spend working on their basketball skills.

"I think that we feel that there are things they can continue to do as far as continuing to stay strong, continuing to maintain a conditioning level and really just put a lot of time and effort and energy into their bodies," Budenholzer said.

After blowing a 2-0 lead to the eventual league champion Toronto Raptors in last season's Eastern Conference finals, Milwaukee appeared to have all the elements in place to make a serious championship run this year before the pandemic struck.

The Bucks had just returned from a winless three-game trip west when the hiatus occurred, but that was the first time they had lost as many as two straight contests all season.

Despite their optimism and their confidence that league officials will do what's best for the safety of everyone, the Bucks realize that play might not resume. However, Budenholzer said they aren't thinking about what impact canceling the season might have.

"If for some reason this season is not played or there's nothing to look forward to or to complete, I'll process it then," Budenholzer said. "I would add that I don't think it's being totally head-in-the-sand. I think hopefully watching news, listening to the commissioner, listening to whether it be Tony Fauci or Dr. (Deborah) Birx or whoever it is, it does feel like there is I think some realistic hope and belief that we will get through this."

"I know that there are some



In this Feb. 24, 2020 file photo, Milwaukee Bucks forward Giannis Antetokounmpo (34) goes to the basket against Washington Wizards center Ian Mahinmi, left, during the first half of an NBA game in Washington.

negatives, some less optimistic modeling, but literally all we think about is we are going to play and we want to be the best team when we do play so how do we prepare for that, how do we get better? It's a great way to get through this."

Reduced pay

Meanwhile, with uncertainty looming around the coronavirus pandemic, the NBA and NBPA are engaged in preliminary discussions on reducing player pay in the event the rest of the season is canceled.

The two sides are discussing the collective bargaining agreement's "force majeure" clause that addresses pay reduction in the event of canceled games. It could lead to the league withholding up to 25 percent of player salaries for the remainder of the season, according to the report.

The NBPA reportedly sent a letter to players on March 13 reminding them of the clause that addresses an event that "makes it economically impracticable for the NBA to perform its obligation" in terms of player pay.

Per Article XXXIX, section 5(a) of the CBA, those events include: "Wars or war-like action ... sabotage, terrorism or threats of sabotage or terrorism; explosions; epidemics; weather or natural disasters, including, but not limited to, fires, floods, droughts, hurricanes, tornados, storms or earthquakes; and any governmental order or action [civil or military]."

The clause calls for players to lose around 1 percent of their salary for every game not played. Most teams have played 64 or 65 of their scheduled 82 regular-season games.

The cancellation of games would automatically trigger the clause. Discussions have included commissioner Adam Silver, NBPA director Michele Roberts and attorneys for both sides, according to the report.

NEW YORK (AP)— With so much uncertainty around the NBA season, Brooklyn Nets general manager Sean Marks is no longer ruling out Kevin Durant for the season.

Marks repeatedly had said he didn't expect Durant to play this season while recovering from Achilles tendon surgery, but he acknowledged Wednesday that everything is unknown now that the season is suspended because of the new coronavirus.

Durant was injured in the 2019 NBA Finals, so he would have a year to recover if the league were to resume in June.

Even Kyrie Irving, who had shoulder surgery on March 3, might be available if play stretched into the summer.

Nets unsure if Durant, Irving could play if season resumes

But Marks said he couldn't even give an answer if the superstars would be able to play this season.

"I don't think that's fair, one to those athletes, nor the performance team, to put a timeline on this. I think everybody is dealing with bigger items, far more pressing items," Marks said during a conference call.

"I do know that those two players are continuing their rehab, but again, when you're practicing social distancing and you're in self-isolation, I haven't physically seen them in three or four weeks. So it's difficult for me to gauge, let alone the performance team,

as to where they are."

Irving played 20 games during an injury-plagued first season in Brooklyn before undergoing arthroscopic surgery to relieve a right shoulder impingement. There was no timetable for his return.

A potential extra couple of months could benefit the injured players. But with all team practice facilities shut, the time it takes to rehab may be lengthened.

"I think something we have to think about is our facilities are closed and just by getting time off, yes, does that make your body heal and so forth?" Marks said. "But there were several of our players that

need the facilities, need game reps, need to be playing, and you could take the other side of this and say that this hiatus has set their rehabilitation back and it's slowed them."

And without the team being able to see them, only the players know for sure where they are.

"We're talking to them and FaceTiming them and so forth, but it's quite different to having those guys on the court," Marks said. "And they know their bodies better than anyone else, so at the right time and when they're a hundred percent and they're up for it, I'm sure they'll be making those decisions."

Marks also said that the four Nets players who tested positive for COVID-19 have completed their two weeks of quarantine and are now symptom-free. Durant had told The Athletic he was one of the players.

Durant had been working out and his participation in the Olympics hadn't been ruled out before they were postponed a year.

Now, it's the NBA that might be playing in July or August.

Marks had put everything on hold when the season was suspended March 11, telling the Nets to spend time worrying about their families. Now,

they've begun having regular interactions through Zoom and FaceTime.

They had changed coaches just before play was halted, and Marks said he's been impressed the way interim coach Jacques Vaughn and staff have interacted with the players. For now, Marks said he isn't reaching out to anyone as the possible replacement for Kenny Atkinson.

But there's plenty more work to do for a team on track to be in the postseason if the NBA is able to have one.

"I think they're turning over every rock they possibly can to play and looking at every different outcome," Marks said. "From a team perspective, all I can say is we have to be preparing for everything."

NFL teams rely on tape as virus alter pre-draft routine



AURORA, Colo. (AP)—Let's go to the tape.

NFL teams are having to rely more heavily on game film of college prospects as they prepare for the draft at a time when the COVID-19 pandemic has halted business as usual across the globe.

The social distancing spawned by the new coronavirus has halted pro timing days at college campuses. It's also led the league to forbid teams from hosting prospects at team headquarters or visiting them for in-person interviews, meetings that are usually such an integral part of the annual evaluations that they can make or break a franchise's fortunes.

"We'll just have to conclude the best we can from what we can see on the tape," Denver Broncos general manager John Elway said in a conference call Tuesday.

Broncos coach Vic Fangio said scouts and college personnel appraisers are fond of suggesting that ninth-tenths of the evaluation of a player is based on what he did in college, with just 10% coming off the NFL scouting combine, college pro days and personal interviews.

"This is the year it will really be tested," Fangio said. "It will be 90% what you see on tape, and we'll go from there."

Fangio is putting a positive spin on the situation.

"We do not have the workout times that you normally



Alabama wide receiver Jerry Jeudy runs a drill at the NFL football scouting combine in Indianapolis, Thursday, Feb. 27, 2020.

AP

have to evaluate guys, but sometimes those workout times and that information just clouds the issue," Fangio said. "It's nice to know what a guy runs a 40 in, but how fast does he look on tape is more important."

"A lot of times you can guess how fast a guy runs, generally speaking. It's more important what the tape says."

Less than an hour's drive from the Broncos' headquar-

ters, new University of Colorado football coach Karl Dorrell is lamenting how FaceTime has replaced face time with his players because of the shelter-in-place and stay-at-home orders that have been issued amid the pandemic.

While emphasizing that these measures are what's most important to curtail the spread of the virus, Dorrell, who left his job as the Miami Dolphins receivers coach to

take over at Colorado following Mel Tucker's departure in February, said truer evaluations are made in person.

"Tape kind of gives you an idea, but from my experience, it's getting your hands on the players on the grass," Dorrell said. "That's when you know what you have. You can kind of feel their movement, their explosiveness, their lack thereof, anything that are important ingredients for you to

make an assessment."

That's why he's so eager for normalcy to return, so that he can get up-close looks at the roster he inherited.

"To me it's always been best when I see it live and when I see them running around, when I see them competing against each other. Those are the best telltale signs of making your evaluation," Dorrell said.

And, Dorrell said, that holds true whether it's an NFL assistant assessing college talent as he once did or a college coach checking out a high school prospect as he's doing now.

"I'd rather see the person to evaluate a person. When I was in the NFL evaluating receivers, the combine's fine, but that's a group setting and you're not really getting specific information that you need," Dorrell said. "I would get more out of when I went back to that particular student-athlete's university and worked him out and got him on the board and we talked football and we did all these different things."

A recent example he pointed to was former Colorado State receiver Preston Williams, whose off-the-field issues kept him from getting drafted last year.

Williams signed with Miami after getting bypassed in the seven-round draft and had 32 catches for 428 yards and three touchdowns before a knee injury cut short his sensational rookie season.

"He was a transfer there from Tennessee and he had a little bit of a baggage background," Dorrell said. "But when I met the kid we had a

great conversation at the combine, we continued to stay in contact with each other, I continued to do my research with coaches both at Tennessee and at Colorado State.

"And you know we felt that we got a steal, to make a long story short, when we were able to pick him up as an undrafted free agent in Miami last year," Dorrell said. "If you don't dive into the information like that, you tend to miss a lot of things."

As Elway prepares for a draft unlike any other, he said a radical decision Fangio made this spring is paying unexpected dividends as the team builds its draft board for the April 23-25 selection process.

Fangio didn't take his assistant coaches to the combine in Indianapolis at the end of February and instead had them work remotely back in Denver evaluating players at their respective positions.

"It helped us tremendously, I think," Elway said. "Vic had the coaches stay home from the combine and spend one full week on the draft so all the coaches got all of their reports in on the players in this year's draft. That was beneficial. Then, we'll hold interviews with the players over the telephone or whether it be in Zoom instead of having the 30 visits that we've had."

"So, I actually feel pretty good about where we are. With the draft staying where it is, it is fine. We'll just move ahead and deal with the hand we're dealt."

Compressed schedule could mean more pitchers



NEW YORK (AP)—When and if opening

day comes around this year, New York Yankees pitching coach Matt Blake anticipates a brimming bullpen.

Major League Baseball and the players' association have talked about a compressed schedule to get in as many games as possible. That will set off a call to arms.

"I think if you have 15 guys it gives you some depth," Blake said Wednesday.

Active rosters were to expand from 25 to 26 from opening day through Aug. 31 in exchange for the limit dropping from 40 to 28 from Sept. 1 on. When a strike delayed the start of the 1995 season until April 25, teams were allowed 28 players through May 15.

There is talk of 28- to 30-man rosters following the shutdown caused by the new coronavirus. Teams are preparing for a season that could extend into late November or

even December, if domes and ballparks in warm-weather cities are used.

"Both the PA and the MLB are very, very adamant about playing as many games as we can this year," Seattle pitcher Marco Gonzales said. "I think it favors everyone—the fans, the ownership group, the players. I think it's the right thing to do, and so we're going to probably have to get creative on how to do that. There's been talks of double-headers, skipping off days here and there. There's going to be a lot of things that we have to get creative with."

Teams that carried nine or 10 pitchers in the 1960s and 1970s have had 13 in recent years and even 14 for some American League games. A new rule this season limits pitchers to 13 through August and 14 the rest of the way, but that could be tossed in a reconfigured season as openers and perhaps six-man rotations gain prominence.

"We haven't really mapped

it out that far yet," Blake said during a conference call from his home in Ohio. "We obviously know that our depth will be tested, as will both teams."

MLB has delayed opening day until mid-May at the earliest. Starting pitchers were two-to-three outings within being ready for the season.

"We're doing everything we can to maintain kind of where we were, getting our up-and-downs and our pitch counts and all of that," Chicago White Sox All-Star right-hander Lucas Giolito said. "Despite limited resources, we're able to pick up a ball and throw it and change intensities and measure it out. I think when it does come time for us to play again, we've already been communicating pretty much on a weekly basis with our coaching staff and training staff and everything like that. We'll just kind of pick it up and kind of gauge where guys are at and make decisions from there."

Yankees left-hander James

Federer devastated over Wimbledon cancelation

LONDON—Former champion Roger Federer said he was “devastated” that Wimbledon has been cancelled for the first time since World War II because of the coronavirus.

Wimbledon chiefs pulled the plug on the oldest Grand Slam tournament on Wednesday in response to the continued chaos caused by the pandemic.

Federer, who has won a record

eight Wimbledon men’s singles titles, reacted with a single word, tweeting: “devastated.”

Serena Williams, a seven-time Wimbledon women’s singles champion, was also rocked by the news as the American tweeted: “I’m Shooked (sic).”

Federer and Serena will be nearly 40 by the time of the 2021 championships.

Wimbledon was due to run for two weeks from June 29,

with Novak Djokovic and Simona Halep set to defend their singles titles.

But All England Club chiefs were left with no choice but to cancel the grass-court event—which was first staged in 1877—due to the continued health crisis across the world.

Halep, the Romanian who defeated Serena to win Wimbledon for the first time last year, tweeted: “So sad to hear Wimbledon won’t take place this year.”

“Last year’s final will forever be one of the happiest days of my life! But we are going through something bigger than tennis and Wimbledon will be back! And it means I have even longer to look forward to defending my title.”

American legend Billie-Jean King, a six-time singles champion at Wimbledon, said the cancellation was the right decision.

“I fully understand and support the decision of the committee and it is vital we keep our focus on those most impacted by this pandemic. I have been fortunate to go to Wimbledon every year since 1961 and I am certainly going to miss it this year,” she said.

“Right now, we need to make sure we are taking good care of ourselves and our

doubles event.

Meanwhile, other girls U12 players who received ranking points this season were Wang (2,000), Hannah Chae (1,600), Lina Tsukagoshi (900), Jeong Bing Park (800), Isa Nishitani (550), Anne Lee (400), and Ellie Cho (250).

The rankings in each age group are part of Northern Mariana Islands Tennis Association’s selection criteria for players who will represent the Commonwealth to the North Pacific Regional Championships in Guam and the Pacific Oceania Junior Championships in Fiji. Ranking points are still up for grabs, as NMITA has two remaining competitions for the season—Bridge Capital Tennis Classic and the CNMI Junior Championships.

WESSEL

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former has tallied 3,000 points versus the latter’s 2,150.

Chung reigned supreme in the TanHoldings Tennis Classic and Coconut Tennis Classic to receive 1,000 points each and she also won in the doubles competition (teaming up with Hoo Wang) of the first event of the season. In the SIS tourney, Chung was handed 750 points for placing second to Wang in the singles event.

Kwon finished third both in the SIS and TanHoldings contests to notch 600 points apiece, while her runner-up performance in the Coconut Tennis Classic earned her 750 points. She also gained 200 points from the TanHoldings

TRENCH

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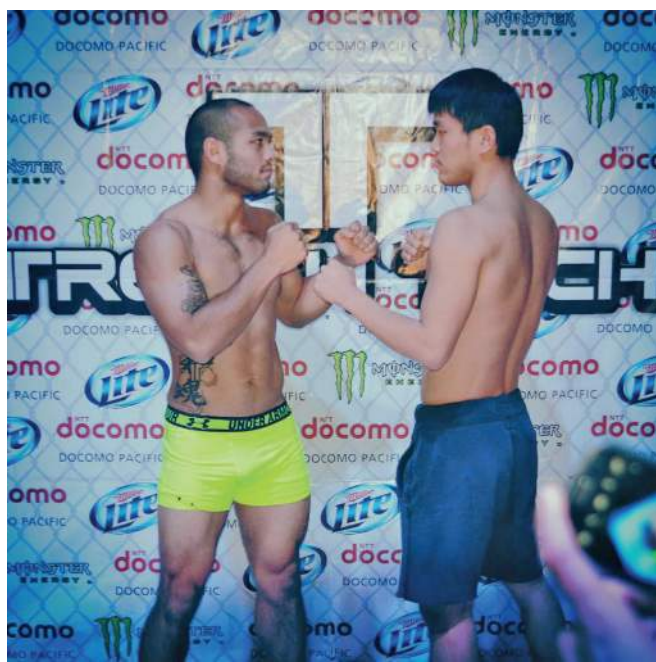
(rectangular cage) they utilized in Trench Warz 1, 2 (Caged In) and 3 (Commotion)

“We were very excited to debut the octagon at the World Resort at the Taga Hall and showcase MMA at a whole other level. Not to mention, the fighters were super excited to fight in an actual 8-sided cage,” Alvarez said.

Camacho fought in Trench Warz 4 and won via TKO (punches) against Troy Munoz in the first round, while Slade “The Rage” Adelbai prevailed in his main event bout against Antonio Nekaifes, also via TKO in the third round.

After hosting five pro events through Trench Warz, Trench Tech saw the need to tap newcomers in the sport and give them opportunity to showcase their skills thus the birth of Rites of Passage.

“We had ROP 1: Rise of the Warriors. This was our very first amateur only MMA event. We created this event to give the young, up-and-coming fighters a chance to fight and ‘earn their RITES’ to make it into the bigger show or pro level. In ROP, fighters are matched with opponents of the same level basically, exclusively for inexperienced, first, second and even third time guys who may want to



Frank “The Crank” Camacho, left, faces off with South Korean Jae Woong Kim during the weigh-in for Trench Warz 18 held in December 2014.

redeem their performance and impress the scouts. ROP went on to become one of our most popular events and nowadays, we add a few pro fights in there to entice the crowd and inspire the younger fighter to excel,” Alvarez said.

With Trench Tech and its events developing more MMA fighters on island, pitting them against Guam’s own came next and brought out the best from the CNMI warriors.

“Trench Warz 10: Collision was the first event where we

strictly had Guam vs Saipan. It was a sold out event! The fans loved this show and were cheering for all our local talent to win. I believe out of 14 matches, we won five. Guam edged us out, but it showed the evolution of MMA in the CNMI in just a couple short years and showed that with more training, Saipan fighters can compete competitively at the highest level in the Marianas region,” Alvarez said.

Kelvin “The Big Hit” Fital recorded one of those five vic-



In this Feb. 20, 2020 file photo, Roger Federer has announced his withdrawal from a number of tournaments, including the French Open, after surgery on his right knee.

loved ones. These are challenging times for all of us and now is the time for us to do what is right for our world and what works for our sport.”

Two-time champion Petra Kvitova summed up the prevailing sentiment among players as she said it would be hard to go a year without visiting Wimbledon.

“Definitely a tough one to take, with the announcement of the cancellation of Wimbledon this year,” she said.

“Not only is it a special tournament to me, but it’s a tournament that has been part of history for so long that it will leave a big hole in the calendar. I will miss playing on the beautiful grass and wearing my whites, BUT of course we know it will be back better than ever next year. And maybe we will all appreciate it even more! Stay safe and stay inside,” she added.

Coco Gauff, the teenager who dazzled with her surprise

run to the last 16 year, tweeted: “I’m gonna miss playing in Wimbledon this year. Stay safe everyone, love you guys.”

Kevin Anderson, beaten by Djokovic in the 2018 final, tweeted: “I’ve always had so many great memories at Wimbledon.

“The grass season will definitely be missed but the most important thing right now for us to focus on is that we’re all staying healthy and safe at home.”



Trench Tech owner Cuki Alvarez, second row right, joins Tinian MMA fighters and coaches for a group photo after the island hosted a small competition in 2010.



Two MMA newcomers battle on the ground in one of Trench Tech’s Rites of Passage events at the Saipan World Resort.

tories, beating Manny “The Enforcer” Chong via KO (punches) at the 4:47 mark of the opening round.

After challenging Guam

fighters, the islands’ bets turned its focus on the highly-competitive Korean Top Team standouts, as Trench Tech hosted ROP 8: Fear-

less in 2010.

“It was the first time we had an international card with three Korean fighters going up against our Trench Tech guys,” Alvarez said. “It was a huge step up in competition for us, but we were totally up for the challenge.”

The three featured bouts had the late Fasi “Quikdraw” Jesse battling “Dr.” Kang Beom Chang, Adelbai meeting Hyun Kyu “The Ace” Lim, and Chris “No Luv” Layuug squaring off against Young Nam “The Hippo” Gu

“Both Fasi and Slade lost via TKO but put up valiant fights against their far more experienced opponents. Chris won via unanimous decision. It was a great experience for local fighters and helped us elevate the competition to a much higher standard, which we did,” the Trench Tech founder said.

Meanwhile, Alvarez said MMA’s success in the CNMI in the last 15 years is made possible through the support of the fight fans and other members of the community.

“Trench Tech wants to tell all the fight fans thank you very much for all their support in the past 15 years,” Alvarez said.

“We look forward to coming back sooner than later. Right now, the biggest fight is against COVID-19 and together as a community we can win!”



Bucks confident
to make run for
first title

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NFL teams rely
on tape as virus
alter pre-draft
routine

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SAIPAN TRIBUNE

20 FRIDAY, APRIL 3, 2020

Trench Tech's MMA hit list



By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
roselyn_monroyo@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

SAIPAN TRIBUNE

In this undated file photo, Roman "Sonic Boom" Alvarez, left, kicks Derek "El Peligro" Rangamar in one of Trench Tech's Rites of Passage events at the Saipan World Resort.

Trench Tech had its first MMA competition in November 2005, paving the way for



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Jason Tarkong hits the scale during the weigh-in for one of the early Trench Warz events.

23 Rites of Passage (amateur) events and 21 Trench Warz (pro) contests. The inaugural tournament dubbed "Trench Warz 1: Fight Night," undoubtedly, led Alvarez's Top 5 hit list in the last 15 years.

"It was this 'inaugural' event that catapulted Trench Tech to the MMA powerhouse in the Marianas that it is today. We have produced lots of local talents now competing in some of the top stages regionally and in the world, like Frank "The Crank" Camacho in UFC. If it weren't for TW1,

we wouldn't be where we are today," Alvarez said.

The following year and after holdings three successful events at a cramped warehouse along Beach Road, Trench Tech had its debut in a "big stage" with the hosting of "Trench Warz 4: Enter The Octagon" at the Saipan World Resort.

Alvarez said they were able to raise enough money from the three previous events to build the full-blown octagon, replacing the "wrectagon"

See TRENCH on Page 19

Fifteen years ago, Trench Tech Promotions, Inc. started a mission of showcasing warriors on the octagon cage and co-founder and owner Cuki Alvarez can't help but look back how MMA blossomed to become one of the anticipated sports events in the Marianas.



ROSELYN B. MONROYO
Nason Wessel returns to Hyutaka Kadokura during their boys U12 singles game in the 2020 Coconut Tennis Classic last February at the American Memorial Park tennis courts.

Wessel, Chung ahead in U12 ranking

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
roselyn_monroyo@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Nason Wessel and Irin Chung are the frontrunners in the U12 division of the CNMI Junior Tennis Rankings.

Wessel is ahead in the race for the boys U12 top ranking after earning 2,550 points from three tournaments. His recent one was the Coconut Tennis Classic last February where Wessel got 1,000 ranking points for ruling the singles play following his 6-2, 6-4 finals triumph over Simon Tang.

The 11-year-old Wessel, who is celebrating his birthday today, also made it to the finals of the TanHoldings Tennis Classic in November last

year and finished runner-up to June Yu to gain 750 ranking points. In the doubles event, Wessel partnered with Takeru Jin and they were awarded with 200 points each for placing second in the competition. Wessel then got an additional 600 points when he barged into the semifinals of the Saipan International School STUCO Tournament in January this year.

Yu won the SIS competition to add 1,000 ranking points to the earlier 1,000 points he took for topping the TanHoldings event. He also prevailed in the doubles (partnering with Wataru Kadokura) contest of the first

tournament of the 2019-2020 season to collect 250 points, putting him at close second behind Wessel, as Yu has collected 2,250 points.

Rounding out the Top 5 in the boys U12 ranking are Hyutaka Kadokura (1,800 points), his brother Wataru (1,600), and Jim (1,200). Completing the list are Tang (900), Ki Won Lee (850), Aiden Kim (750), Ocean Kang (675), Henry Choi (250), Landon Pudney (240), Leo Kim (200), and Eamon (100) and Sunny Kang (100).

In the girls U12 division, Chung enjoys a good lead against Anna Kwon, as the

See WESSEL on Page 19